

LILLY'S TRAVELS



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CHILD LIFE SERIES



CHILD LIFE. LITTLE LILLY'S TRAVELS.
OLD FRIENDS. HAPS AND MISHAPS.
NEIGHBORLY LOVE.

BOSTON
D. LOTHROP & Co.

LITTLE LILY'S TRAVELS

THROUGH

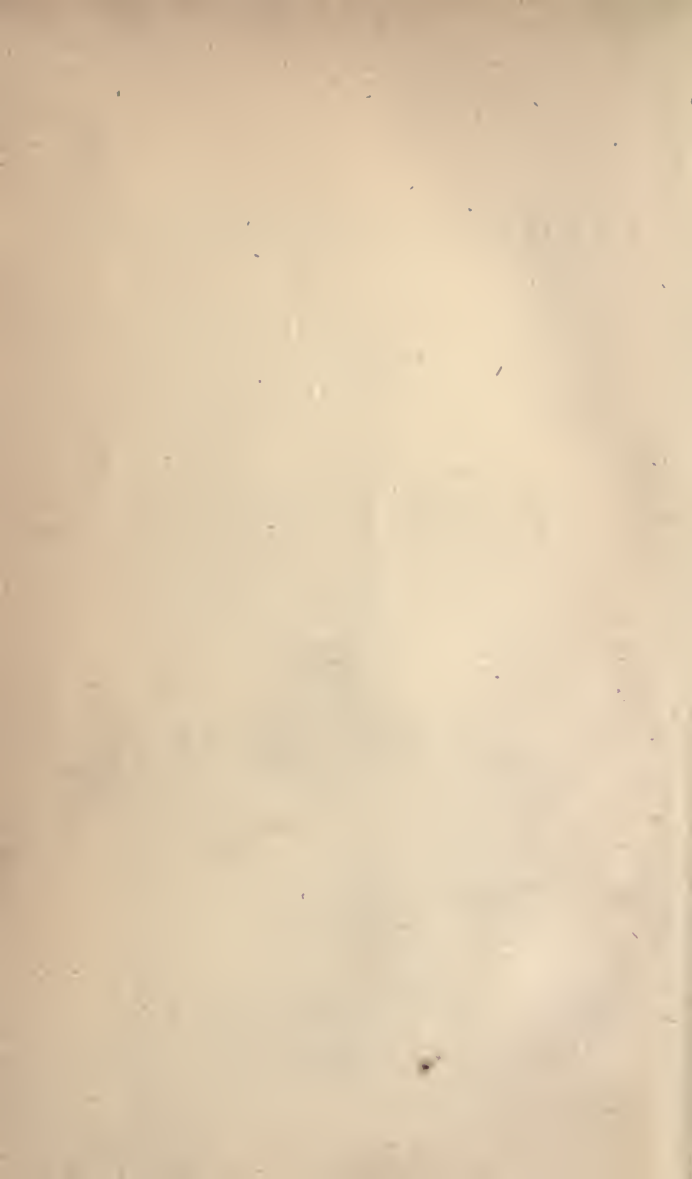
FRANCE TO SWITZERLAND.



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LITTLE LILY'S TRAVELS.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEPARTURE — THE ILLUMINATION — THE DILIGENCE.

“WE must make haste. Nine o'clock is just going to strike. The coach will be off. Put on Lily's and Francis' travelling hats, and take this basket of provisions. Francis would not like it left behind. Harry, my boy, you are setting out on your first journey, but you do not look as if you cared much. May God watch over us all this night.

“Come, we must be off. Here we are in the street; the door of the house is shut. Adieu, dear house, where we have received such a kind welcome. Adieu, kind friends; we are going away far from you, but we

shall never forget you. And Carlo, our travelling companion, what has become of him? He has been left in the house; listen to his barking. I shall go and unchain him. Oh, how he leaps for joy and runs to the children! he is looking for all his old friends. Yes, Carlo, we are all here."

"O papa, what beautiful lights!"

"Yes, my darling, there is an illumination this evening."

"I see trees burning."

"The lamps are hung on the trees. There is a row of them on both sides of the street. We shall pass down between them."

"What crowds of people! How bright the lights are!"

"There are lights all round us; but as you are too little to see over the heads of all these people, I shall take you up in my arms. There is a long row of lights, you see."

"Yes, and there are lights in the sky too."

“But the lights in the sky are not at all like the lights on the earth. The ones near us burn only for a short time. You see a great many have gone out already, and there is a man coming with a long reed in his hand to light them again. Yesterday there were no lights to be seen here, and to-morrow there will be none; but the stars, the lights in the sky, will shine as they are doing now. It is God who has placed them high up there, and he will also make a glorious sun to rise to-morrow morning to light us on our journey.

“Ah! here we have at last arrived at the coach-office. Take care!”

“Where are all these people running to? There are some soldiers.”

“Ah! it is the prince; the town has been lighted up for him.”

“That he may see well?”

“No, my dear, the people wish to show him that they are happy to see him again. He has just come back from a country far away over the sea.”

“He must be very tired.”

“I daresay he is tired, but he will soon forget it when he sees the people so happy to see him. But now the crowd have all run after him, and we must get into the coach. Now, children, give a last kiss to the friends who have been so kind to you.

Adieu, dear friends ; remember the travellers in your prayers. Coachman, put Carlo on the top ; don't be afraid, he is as gentle as a lamb. Wait one moment, here's my cloak to cover him. We are off at last !

“But is that not Carlo's bark ? The poor dog has not seen us, and perhaps thinks we are left behind. He wants to get back to us. What makes him howl in that pitiful way ? Now he has jumped from the top of the coach to the road ! Oh, I am afraid the wheels will hurt him ! Stop, driver ! Carlo, Carlo ! we are here. There he is, standing up at the coach door wagging his tail. He knows us. Coach

man, you may drive on; he will be quiet now, because he knows we are here.

“See what crowds of people! The coachman is always calling out, ‘Take care, take care!’ Many of them I dare say, in passing will be pitying us travellers going away from all that amuses them so much. What do you think of it, children? Would you rather be walking in the streets than driving away?”

“No, because we wish to go to Geneva.”

“You like to go and they like to stay; that is just as it should be. We have left behind us the lights and the crowd, and we shall hear nothing now but the rumbling of the wheels and the sound of the horses’ feet upon the road.”

“Are we at Geneva yet?”

“Oh! not yet, dear; but don’t be afraid, we shall be there in good time.”

“How cold the air feels!”

“Put on your cloak, and lay your head on my knee and go to sleep.”

CHAPTER II.

ORGON — A SISTER OF CHARITY — LITTLE JOSEPH.

“ My dear children, it is daylight and you are still asleep. They do not hear me. They are tired, and we must not awake them. You are sleeping peacefully, because you are with your parents ; and they have no fear, because they know that God takes care of them.

“ While we are going on our journey the sun is rising. There he is appearing above that hill. He will soon awake the children ; one of his bright rays shines into the diligence, and plays upon Lily’s face. Little Lily rubs her eyes, opens them and shuts them again, because the light is too strong.”

“Where are we, papa?”

“A long way from Marseilles. We have been driving on and on all night.”

“Then the poor horses must be very tired.”

“The horses we have now are not the ones with which we set off. We have changed horses three times while you have been sleeping, and now we are going to change again, for we have arrived at Orgon, another stage on our journey. See, they are taking out the horses to let them get a rest as soon as possible. There are our fresh ones; they are not tired, they have been all night in a comfortable stable.”

“What lady is that coming to us?”

“It is a sister of charity.”

“Why is she called a sister?”

“She calls herself a sister of charity, because she goes about visiting and attending to sick people as if they were her brothers and sisters—just as Lily would nurse Francis if he were sick, or Francis Lily.”

“Her dress is all black.”

“Yes, all the women who call themselves sisters of charity wear these strange dresses ; but we may love and be kind to the sick without having an odd, ugly dress. The dress is nothing ; it is the kind heart that is wanted. Neither Francis nor Lily have a black dress, or a white hood ; but if they are loving children, and wish to be kind, they may do something to help their poor brothers and sisters, even though they are little children. How many brothers have you ?”

“Two.”

“And you ?”

“A brother and a sister.”

“Ah ! God has given you a great many more.”

“And where are they ?”

“They are all the little children in the world.”

“Do you see that little boy on the road ?”

“Is that a brother ?”

“I do not know him.”

“He has got no shoes on.”

“His hands are dirty.”

“Ah! that is because he is poor.”

“He gathers rags in the road and sells them to buy bread.”

“Do you know who has created him?”

“The good God.”

“And you?”

“The good God.”

“And where has God placed him?”

“On the earth.”

“And you?”

“On the earth too.”

“And who does the earth belong to?”

“To God.”

“So then this little boy and you live together in God’s house; and the same sun which shines into our diligence warms his bare feet; the same rain falls upon him and upon you; the same stars which shine at night over our head shine over his; and one day both you and he, if you love God, will meet in heaven.”

“Papa, may I speak to him?”

“Perhaps he would not answer you. I had better speak to him first.”

“Little boy, will you go to the other side of the ditch for a blue flower which I see there, and get it for my little girl? There is a yellow one, too, a little further off, which I would like you to bring for my little boy.

“He sees what I want, and is off at once. See how he runs. There he is coming back already with the flowers. Come upon the step, my little fellow; the diligence* is not yet ready to start. What pretty flowers! Lily, here is yours.”

“And mine, papa?”

“There it is; they are still wet with the morning dew.”

“What is your name?”

“Joseph.”

“Don’t go down yet. I am sure these children would like to give you something

* A diligence is the name of a French stage-coach.

for the beautiful flowers you have brought them. Would you not, dears ? ”

“ Yes ! yes ! ”

“ Let us see. What will you give him ? ”

“ Some of our toys. ”

“ Then, come here to the door, that you may give them yourselves. ”

“ Put your hand into this basket, Joseph, and choose what you like ; don't be afraid. ”

“ He has taken my beautiful horse ! I don't wish him to take it away ! I don't wish it ! ”

“ Joseph, will you give him back his horse ? I am very sorry that my little boy should be so unkind to you, after you have been so kind to him. ”

“ Papa, I will let him have it. ”

“ Very well. Joseph, since he gives it to you willingly now, take it again, and lend it to your brothers and sisters at home. Good-by my little friend. ”

“ Good-by ; good-by.”

“ The horses are put in now. Do you see how impatient that one is to get away ? See how he tosses his head and prances ! He is off ; there is no need for the whip. The two others are as ready to set off as he is.”

CHAPTER III.

THE DURANCE — THE CLOUD — AVIGNON.

“FRANCIS, what do you see beyond these tall poplars?”

“The sea.”

“No, my boy, it is only a river — the Durance — which in a short time we shall cross on a wooden bridge.”

“How pretty the flowers are in the hedge-rows! Let down the windows that we may breathe the fresh morning air.”

“How quickly we are going! The trees seem to fly away behind us! Oh, what pretty sheep in that meadow!”

“Francis, my boy, come here and look out at this side. Ah! you are too late.”

“I wish to see them!”

“The diligence cannot stop; but we shall probably see more of them. See, there is another little flock! There will be plenty of time to see it, for we have come to a hill. There is a ewe looking at us; her lamb is lying near her.”

“See, it has risen, and is leaping for joy. Now it is eating the fresh grass; and now it is running races. Ah! in one of its gambols it has fallen into a ditch.”

“I see one all black come to look for it.”

“Now they are playing, knocking their heads against each other.”

“Will they hurt one another?”

“No, my dears; lambs are gentle creatures, and little children should try to be gentle like them.”

“They have gone away.”

“No, we have gone away from them.”

“We are not walking.”

“No, but the horses are walking; and they drag the diligence. Just notice if we

have not changed our place. There was a few minutes ago a flock of sheep at one side, and now there is none; there was no bridge, and now there is one. We shall cross it immediately; it is over the Durance. Our coach goes between these red painted railings. The water runs far below us, but it cannot come up to us. Here we are across."

"Are we at Geneva yet?"

"Not yet at Geneva; but in a short time we shall be at Avignon. Are you wearied with the journey? Shall I tell you something?"

"Yes! yes!"

"Well, in a little while you will see water which comes from Geneva."

"Where does this water run to?"

"It runs down to the sea."

"Does it not go back to Geneva with us?"

"No, dear; a river always runs on. It can never go back again. But I am mis-

taken ; a part of the beautiful Rhone, which you will see immediately, goes back to Geneva. Can you guess how it gets back ? ”

“ In a coach ? ”

“ No.”

“ In a steamer ? ”

“ No.”

“ We do not know.”

“ It goes back in a cloud.”

“ Oh ! ”

“ I shall tell you how. Lily, do you remember that one day after the eggs had been boiled for breakfast, you took the pan and put it on the fire, and left it there, and what happened ? ”

“ Oh ! I was so sorry — the pan was burned.”

“ There was water in the pan when you put it on, was there not ? ”

“ Yes ; but the water all went away.”

“ Where did it go ? ”

“ I do not know.”

“It went up into the air, — the heat of the fire made it go up into the air.”

“I did not see it.”

“You did not see it go up as water, but you saw white smoke going up out of the pan did you not? That white smoke was the water, which the heat of the fire had turned into steam. And it is also heat, the heat of the sun, which makes the water rise into the air.”

“But we have never seen it.”

“It is not easily seen, because the tiny drops which the sun draws up are so fine and small; but when a great many are gathered together, they make what is called a cloud.”

“Where does it go?”

“Wherever the wind drives it, over mountains and valleys. It may stop, for instance, over Geneva; and the rain which falls from that cloud may be the same water which had risen into the air from the river.”

"I wonder which of us will be the first to see the beautiful river Rhone. We are very near it now."

"What do you see, Francis?"

"High towers."

"These are the towers of Avignon. From them can be seen the ribbon of the Rhone winding through the fields."

"Is the Rhone then a ribbon?"

"No, but it is like one. I saw it one day from the top of a high mountain, and its windings across the flat country below were like a silvery blue ribbon carelessly thrown on a green carpet."

"And you, Lily, do you see anything pretty?"

"I see beautiful trees on this side."

"Look down. What do you see there?"

"Water."

"That is the Rhone, children; and as we go on we shall see it better. It is not so blue here as when it leaves the lake."

"Why?"

“ Because as it runs on to the sea a great many rivers and streams pour their muddy waters into it.”

“ But how is this ? You know we were to have gone up the river in a steamer. I see no boat, and it is very late. The horses stop ; we have arrived. Let us ask this gentleman who is coming up to the coach about the boat.

“ Will you be kind enough to tell us sir, if there will be a boat going up the river to-day ? ”

“ The last for to-day left three hours ago. There will be one to-morrow ; but surely you don't think of going by a steamer ! ”

“ Why ? ”

“ Because it is very uncomfortable and so slow. I would advise you to go by coach, and you will be in Lyons to-morrow evening. For the rest of the journey you may do as you like ; but I assure you that you had better take my advice, and take the coach as far as Lyons.”

“Where does the coach start from?”

“From this office.”

“And who gives out the tickets for the coach?”

“I do.”

“Thank you sir, I shall just go to the steamboat office before deciding. Children, you had better stay with mamma till I come back.”

CHAPTER IV.

A LITTLE BOY BETTER THAN MOST BOYS.

“ I BRING good news, children. We can still go to-day, and as the boat will sail very soon, we must make haste. My boy, you will carry this parcel ; and you, Lily, take this basket. All travellers must try to be useful. How very sorry I am to leave this town so soon ! ”

“ Why ? ”

“ Because I have a very dear friend here. How pleasant it would have been to have surprised him by a visit ! I should have liked to see his children, and to show you to him.”

“ Does he not know us ? ”

“ No ; but he loves you.”

“ And do you love him ? ”

“ Listen for a moment. One day, a long time ago, he paid a visit to my mother, and said to her, putting his hand on my head, and looking kindly at me, ‘ Send this little boy to me, and I shall teach him what he ought to know to make him a wise man.’ I was sent, and from that time he taught me all that boys learn at school and college. I lived with him, and he was as kind to me as if I had been his own son. Don’t you think I must love this friend who was so kind to me ? ”

“ O yes, you must love him very much. But why was he so good and kind ? ”

“ Because he had suffered very much. He has often told me his own story.”

“ Oh, do tell it to us ! ”

“ I am not sure that it would be right for me to tell you unless he allowed me. Suppose he were to hear about the stories I have told you, do you not think he might be displeased with me for telling you all about him ? But, to be sure, I might tell him

that it is good for my children to know what such a useful man as he is, did when he was a child."

"The story! the story!"

"Well, when he was your age, he was poor and often very ill. He had no amusement of any kind. He came home immediately after school was over, and while his companions were playing, what do you think he did? His work was to shell almonds; and often the hammer, instead of striking the shell, came down upon his little fingers, which would have made many other children cry, but this little boy suffered and went on with his work without complaining. He would have liked sometimes to have eaten some of the delicious almonds, but was not allowed to taste a single one."

"Why?"

"Because they were not his own."

"Did they belong to his mother?"

"If they had been hers, he would not

have been forbidden to eat them. They belonged to a confectioner, who gave her a few pence for taking them out of the shell. But that is not all. When his little fingers became tired, he got cotton to pick, which he worked at as diligently."

"Why?"

"Because he felt happy in being able to do something for his parents in return for their sending him to school. One day, while busily cracking his almonds, the thought struck him that he would like to study. 'I will become a teacher,' he said to himself, 'and make money, so that my father and mother may not be obliged to work when they are old.' He did not tell any one what he was going to do; but God, who knew it, blessed him, and helped him to do far more than he expected; and I am certain that now, when he is better off, he remembers with pleasure the time when he broke almonds at his father's fireside, and often speaks of it to his children."

"Has he children?"

“ Yes ; a little Charles, and a little Helen.”

“ I wish they could go with us to Geneva.”

“ Oh, they could not leave their papa and mamma.”

“ But when shall we see them ? ”

“ I don't know, but I hope some time soon, for I wish the children to love each other as their fathers do.”

CHAPTER V.

THE SIROCCO — THE SIMOOM — THE ARABS.

“CARLO, why is Carlo staying behind?”

“The poor dog is very tired. When we left Orgon he barked with all his might to get down from the top of the coach; and once down, he played about on the road, leaping over ditches, and trying to keep up with the horses. You remember how one moment he would run before them, then come back and spring up to their heads. I told you he could not go on long running so much. The groom has washed his mouth, but he will neither eat nor drink. He will soon have a rest now. The steamer we are going by is one of the best on the Rhone, and if it deserves its name, it ought to go as fast as the wind.”

“What is it called?”

“The *Sirocco*; but you do not know what that means.”

“No.”

“It is a sea-wind; and one day when it was blowing, we took you to the shore at Montredon. The waves did not break at our feet as they usually do, but, blown by the *sirocco* back into the sea, they rushed like a great flock of sheep over a green plain. We saw them dashing against the rocks of the Castle of If, and covering them with a sheet of foam. The ships on the sea then dance upon the waves like nutshells. There is another wind still more terrible than the *sirocco*, called the *simoom*, which raises the sands of the desert into waves, as the other does the waters of the sea.”

“What is a desert?”

“It is a great barren plain, where nothing but sand and sky are to be seen; no mountains, no towns, no trees. However,

there are men who live in the desert called Arabs."

"What do they do?"

"They guide the people who are obliged to cross the desert on their way to other countries. They take them to shady spots, where they may rest and have a little water to drink."

"Are they good men?"

"Not all of them. Sometimes they rob the poor travellers of everything they have, leaving them without a morsel to eat or anything to cover them. Some are shepherds. They stop wherever there is a little grass to be found for their flocks; and when they have eaten it all up, they move their tents and seek pasture for them elsewhere."

"But you told us there was nothing but sand."

"Here and there are a few trees, with a little grass growing round a well, but there are not many of these spots; and people

who are wandering in the desert often look for them for days before they find one. I have read somewhere of a traveller meeting with some poor Arabs, who had taken off their clothes and fastened them to a stick, so as to make a little shade for themselves from the burning heat of the sun.

“And how do you think they manage to cross the desert. They cannot walk as we do in the streets of Avignon?”

“On horses.”

“No; on camels.”

“You are both right, children. You have seen Arabian horses in Marseilles, but you have never seen a camel but in a picture.

“They are not pretty creatures, but they are very useful. They walk a long distance without feeling tired; can do without drinking for a long time; eat less than a horse, and have more than double the strength of one. When the Arabs are in a hurry, they can travel night and day on their camels.”

“ But why do they not sleep in an inn ? ”

“ Oh, they could not find an inn in the sandy desert. If they should be fortunate enough to find a spring under the shade of a few palm-trees, that is their inn. They unload their camels. The women busy themselves in unfolding and putting up the tents, in feeding the camels, and preparing supper.”

“ And what do the little children do ? ”

“ Pleased to find themselves on their feet again, they run about, screaming with delight, and play with the colts and the young camels ; and when they have had their supper, they all go to sleep. But if they cannot find either a spring or palm-trees, they continue their journey till night comes on, not stopping even to make ready anything to eat. The women cook on the back of the camels while they are walking, so that no time is lost.”

“ But does the dinner not tumble down ? ”

“Perhaps you think their dinners are like ours, and they use turnspits and sauce-pans for cooking it. But the food of the Arabs is very simple ; and when travelling they are satisfied with a few cakes ”

“I am very fond of cakes.”

“You like them for dessert, or while you are waiting for dinner ; but the Arab’s cakes are not sweet, and, except a few dry figs and a little water, they have nothing else for dinner.”

“But how can their caraffes of water stand upright ? ”

“They have no crystal caraffes like ours ; theirs are leathern bottles, which are fastened on the back of the camels.”

“Mamma says the Arabs have neither spoons nor forks.”

“Mamma is right. Francis can you tell me how they manage without them ? ”

“They eat with their fingers.”

“Yes. And do you know any one who eats sometimes with his fingers ? ”

“ Papa, how delightful to be an Arab ! ”

“ Why, my Lily ? ”

“ Because you told us they were so happy.”

“ And are you not delighted, dear children, to get out of the coach and run along in the sunshine ? ”

“ Yes, we are ! ”

“ You see people can be happy without being Bedouins. I assure you, you are much happier than they are. Their journeys are not always so pleasant as ours, for they are often overtaken by that terrible wind which I have just been telling you of. Here, when the cold east wind blows, every one escapes from it by shutting himself up in his house. But the poor Arabs have no wooden or stone houses like ours ; their houses, or tents, as they are called, are only of canvas. And yet they are very glad to have even these ; for, if they should happen to be overtaken by the wind while travelling, they have not time to get under

cover, because the putting up of a tent requires more time than the building a castle of cards."

"Does the wind wait till they get into their houses?"

"Oh, it is not so kind. But there is one of the Bedouin party who knows when the simoom is approaching. You cannot guess who that is?"

"No."

"It is that useful animal the camel, of which I have been telling you."

"But how does he know before the wind comes?"

"He knows it just as the swallows know when the cold is coming, and escape from it by flying to warmer countries; and as the squirrels know that in a short time there will be no fruit on the trees, and they must make provision for the winter."

"But who has taught them all that?"

"The good God."

"Oh, how very good he is!"

“While the party is going merrily on their journey, suddenly the camels stop. The drivers may threaten or beat them. but they obstinately refuse to move a step. They put down their heads, and, turning their backs to the side from which the wind is coming, there they stand quite still. The Arabs understand then that the simoom is coming. They dismount immediately, and each family hastens to put up their tent, looking out all the time to see if there are any clouds of sand in the distance. In the midst of this scene of confusion the dogs howl pitifully, and the little children cry with terror.”

“I do not wish to be a little Arab.”

“The eyes and ears of the horses are covered with a hood. Every one gets under the shelter of his tent, and covers his head with a large shawl, and lies with his face on the ground. Woe be to those who are not sheltered now, for the wind of the desert is passing over the tents.”

‘ And the poor little Arabs ? ’

“ They lie without moving, with their faces on the ground, like their fathers and mothers ; but the air gets so hot they need to cool their faces now and then with a little water which they have put near them ; and sometimes even this water gets as hot as if it had been taken from a fire.”

“ But if the Arabs were to get on their horses and gallop off with their children ? ”

“ The simoom would make up to them. The Arab horses go very fast, but the wind of the desert goes still faster, and very soon both horses and riders would be overtaken, and die in the clouds of burning sand.”

“ Does that wind come here ? ”

“ Oh, no ; don’t be afraid.”

“ And the sirocco ? ”

“ You need not be afraid of it either. I have only told you about it, because the steamer which is to take us up the river is called after it.”

CHAPTER VI.

A DANGEROUS LANDING AT AVIGNON.

“PAPA, there is a steamboat now!”

“That is not ours yet; we wish to go up the river, and that one is going down. See how fast it goes! — it is out of sight already! Do you know this place?”

“No.”

“You have been here before. We came here in a steamboat about a year and a half ago. There had been a great deal of rain, and the river was so very large that we were afraid we would not be able to land. Come here and look over this wall. You see the water is far below us, but that day you could have touched it with your hand. The steamboat came to this place

where we are standing, to land the passengers ; and as the Rhone was growing larger and larger every moment, the captain wished to get off again as soon as possible, because he was afraid he would not be able to pass under the bridge. The passengers tried who would be out first ; we kept quiet in a corner out of the rain. The porters looked like a band of thieves, seizing hold of the luggage and running away with it. I kept my eye on our boxes in case any of them should be carried off. Oh, what a shouting and screaming there was ! And in the midst of all this confusion, instead of troubling your mamma and papa, you sat quiet, looking about you, and wondering what it all meant. At last, after the crowd was away, I got our luggage carried on shore, and we prepared to land ; but this was no easy matter. I told you a minute ago that the water was nearly as high as this wall, and

the steamer was raised high above the landing place. A plank had been laid, with one end on the quay and the other on the boat; and it was over this narrow, slippery, dangerous bridge that we had to pass. For the first half of the way there was a danger of falling into the river, and for the other half, into the mud. While wondering how we were to get safely down, we saw a terrible accident happen to an old man. He was just before us, and had got nearly to the end of the plank, when his foot slipped, and he fell back, hurting himself very much. However, as we were obliged to get down somehow, I took you, little Lily, in my arms; and, as I put my foot on the plank, I asked God to take care of us. Your mamma, who was behind, watched us as we went along, and was very frightened till she saw us safely down. Then I left Lily with her nurse, and came back for you, my big boy, for

you were still in the steamer, and, after leaving you with Lily on the quay, I helped your mamma down, too ; and when we had all met again, we thanked God for having watched over us, as we had asked him to do."

"And then?"

"Then we went into the town, but found so much water in the streets that we could not go further."

"Where did all the water come from?"

"From the Rhone. For some days Avignon was just like a lake ; and when people wished to go out, they had to take a boat."

"Was there water there where my foot is?"

"Look up at this large gate. Do you see a black line?"

"Yes."

"Well, if you could read, you would see figures marked there which tell the year

that the water rose as high as that mark. It would have covered not only your foot, Francis, but your head, and even that coach ; and if you had been in that house over there, you might have taken some water out of the window in your little hand."

"How nice that would have been !"

"The people did not think it very pleasant to see the water rushing into their houses, or to have their trees rooted up, and their harvests destroyed."

"The Rhone is very naughty."

"My dear, the Rhone does not think. It does not know what it does. It is God that permits the waters to carry away houses and fields."

"Then God is not good."

"Am I not good to you ?"

"Yes, you are our good papa."

"And do you know why I sometimes punish you ? why I take away your toys ?

Because I wish to make you good. But I love you quite as much when I take them away as when I give you them. And God, too, takes away his blessings from men, and punishes them, because he wishes them to be good ; he is as kind to them when he allows the water to carry away their trees and fruits as he is to-day when he makes the sun to shine on them, and the soft breath of Spring to blow."

CHAPTER VII.

THE STEAMER.

“DING, dong! ding, dong! Do you hear the steamboat bell? Make haste, it will be off! The porters have taken our luggage on board; we have nothing to look after but ourselves. Take care in crossing the narrow plank! Ah, here we are at last!”

“Puff, puff, puff, puff! What a dreadful noise! Is there anything the matter?”

“Don’t be afraid, my dears; it is only the steam. Don’t you see it rushing out of that long tube by the side of the funnel?”

“What a high chimney, and what black smoke! The sky will be all black.”

“Oh, no, my little man, the sky is so large, so very large, that all the smoke in the world would not take away its beautiful blue color. It is just as if you were to pour my ink-bottle into the sea, Francis ; the beautiful water would be as green and clear as ever.”

“Ah, the paddles are beginning to move, and make the water boil. How the houses are running away ! All the people who were looking at us are far away down there already. Can houses run ? Have they legs ?”

“No, dear, no more than the towers of Avignon palace. They are fixed in the ground, and keep in one place.”

“But we do not see them any more.”

“That is because the steamer has carried us a long way on while we have been talking.”

“Has it legs ?”

“No, but it has wheels, which turn round in the water and make it go.”

“What makes the wheels turn in the water?”

“Steam; the same steam which made so much noise when we were setting off. Do you not remember that last winter I often put a small kettle on my fire, and when the water in it began to boil, the lid began to dance, to your great amusement? Well, it was the steam from the water which raised the lid. The wheels of the boat are a great deal heavier than the lid of my kettle, and they need a great deal more steam to make them move.”

“And where is the water boiled? I don’t see any kettle.”

“It is not boiled in a kettle, dear; there is not one large enough; but in the middle of the boat there is something which does as well as a kettle. It is a large boiler. The water is boiled in it, and it sends out plenty of steam to make the steamer go; but then there must be a

fire. Come to the funnel, and you will feel how hot it is. But you must give me your hand ; it is not safe for little children to walk here alone."

" Why ? "

" Because you might fall into the water. Do you not see these large openings at the side of the deck, where you might fall out ? Or you might burn yourselves on the funnel ; or you might be — but, oh, may God mercifully preserve you from that ! — you might be caught by these great machines which move their iron arms with such a dreadful noise."

" And then could papa not take us out ? "

" Ah, no, my darlings ; but I cannot think of such a thing. Come away to the other side."

" What is the use of these machines ? "

" They make the wheels turn round."

" But there are none of them in the diligence."

“No, but there are horses ; and in a steamboat, these machines are instead of horses. Come away to the other end of the deck ; we shall have a beautiful view, and shall see all the places we are to stop at before we come to them, and the large bell which rings to let passengers know when the steamer is going away. Sit down here.”

“I am very sleepy.”

“You must be tired after travelling all night in a diligence. We shall go down to the saloon to rest, but we must go to the other end of the deck to get to it. Take care not to fall going down this steep stair.

“This saloon is like our drawing-room at home, only the ceiling is lower, and there are little iron pillars to hold it up. Then, instead of two large windows hung with curtains, we have here three small ones on each side with blinds. There are several tables, too, for the use of the passengers. But you are very sleepy.”

“Where are our beds?”

“There they are, — these stuffed seats all round the saloon. It is not a very soft bed; but after I have made it all ready for you, you will sleep very well on it. See, I have covered the cushions with clean sheets, and here are shawls and cloaks to cover you, and I will put one of these tables in front, to keep you from rolling over. Now are you not as comfortable as if you were in your own little bed at home?”

“Yes, yes; and little Harry?”

“Oh, no fear of him; I have laid him between two cushions, and I am sure he thinks he is in his own little crib. But I am afraid the noise of the machinery may disturb him, dear little fellow!”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SAND-BANK.

“It is morning! Lily is awake, and Francis, too. I am very glad, for it is such a beautiful day, it is a pity not to be on deck enjoying it. Come, and we shall have a walk up-stairs; it is too warm here.”

“What are these men doing putting long poles into the river?”

“They are measuring how deep it is, and each time they take the poles out of the water, they tell the captain how many feet deep the water is. Did you think they were singing when you heard them calling out?”

“But why do they wish to know how deep the water is?”

“Because the captain is afraid there will not be enough water for the steamer to sail in, and he wishes to choose the deepest place.”

“And if there is not enough, what will happen?”

“The steamer will run aground, and we shall be stopped in the middle of the Rhone, not able either to go up or down, which will not be very pleasant. I was once stopped in this way before.”

“And you too, mamma?”

“Yes, I too, several years ago; but instead of travelling with papa and you, my dears, I was with your grandmamma and your aunt.”

“And why were you not with us?”

“It was before you were born, my little darlings. I shall tell you what happened. We were on board one of the ‘Eagle

Company's' steamers, like that which has just passed us. I suppose it is because that Company's steamers sail so fast that they have been called after the king of birds. At any rate, we were very comfortable on board. The first night it was beautiful moonlight, and we walked on deck till it was very late. The second night, the sailors put down poles like these into the water every little while, just as they are doing now. They did everything they could to keep the steamer from touching the bottom, but about ten o'clock it struck, and suddenly stopped. The sailors on deck shouted to each other at the top of their voices, and now and then we heard the captain's voice above them all. Oh, what a noise there was! It sounded to us down below as if the sailors were playing among themselves, rolling all the casks and boxes backwards and forwards. We were going to ask what it was, when

the stewardess ran in in a great hurry, saying, 'I beg pardon, but something has been forgotten.' And she opened the door of a little room, looked in, and went away again. 'What has been forgotten?' mamma asked. 'Oh, nothing, nothing at all.' We wondered very much, and wanted to know what it was, and we fancied all manner of things, and the same noise began again on the deck."

"But what was it, mamma?"

"I didn't know at first, my dear, but I very soon found out. A second knock came to the door, and this time it was the captain with one of the sailors. 'Excuse me,' he said, 'I am sorry to disturb you, but there is something here I wish to see.' They went into the little room with a lantern, and saw that a small, round window had been forced open, and the water was coming in. The captain looked very grave, and he and the sailor closed the

window, and fastened it up with a close shutter, to keep the water from coming in. The stewardess stayed behind in the saloon, and we begged her to tell us if anything more had happened. 'Don't be afraid, she said, 'there is nothing to fear; the boat has only run aground. It has struck on a gravel bank, and the sailors have been putting all the heavy things at the stern.'

" 'And what has the captain been doing in that little room?' 'He has been looking to see if the water was coming in at the window, which it did, because the sea was stormy, and the boat had been heavily loaded. But keep quiet,' said the stewardess, 'there is nothing to be afraid of;' and then she went away."

"Were you afraid, mamma?"

"Oh, no, my darling, because I knew that God would take care of us, and not allow anything to happen which was not

to be for our good. About half an hour afterwards we noticed water under the door of the little room, and it increased till there was quite a stream running down the cabin floor. Thinking we ought to tell the captain, I threw on my cloak and rushed on deck. There was no one to be seen ; but after calling several times, one of the sailors came to me, and he gave my message to the captain. He went downstairs, and when he saw the water rushing into the saloon, he advised us to go on deck, and then he set immediately to work to fasten the window more firmly than had been done before. As for us, we three sat down near the funnel, and watched everything the sailors did to get the boat off."

" And what did they do ? "

" Nearly all the sailors got down on the gravel-bank, and at a given signal they all pulled the ropes which had been fastened to the boat for the purpose of dragging it

back ; and those on deck pushed with all their might against the long poles which had been put down into the bed of the river, to help our *Eagle* to fly again. Several times, when the captain thought it was moving off, he ordered the paddles to be set in motion, but all was in vain. The men pulled and pushed, the wheel turned round and round, but the boat stuck fast on the bank. It reminded me of those poor unfortunate butterflies which we often see fastened down by a pin run through the middle of their bodies, actively moving their wings without being able to fly away."

"And what did you do, mamma?"

"I could do nothing but notice what was going on around me. Your grand-mamma, your aunt, and I, would very gladly have helped too ; but what could we have done? We thought the best thing we could do was to sit quiet in our

little corner and wait patiently, without troubling the sailors with our questions, or coming in our way by walking up and down on the deck."

"Is that the end of your story, mamma?"

"No. I think you would not like to leave us in the middle of the Rhone. I have not very much more to tell you, but still I am sure you would like to hear it. About one o'clock in the morning, after a great deal of difficulty and hard work, our sailors, with great delight, saw the boat move. Soon it was going at full speed, and when a short time afterwards, it stopped at its resting-place for the night, we all went to bed, and I need hardly say that every one on board slept soundly."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LETTER — THE PASSAGE OF THE BRIDGE
OF ST. ESPRIT — THE PILOT.

“HAVE you slept well, children?”

“Is my breakfast ready?”

“Yes, my boy, but wait till you are quite awake. Do you know where we are?”

“In a room.”

“What room?”

“In a room in the steamboat.”

“Shall we soon be at Geneva?”

“Yes, Lily Half of the journey is already over.”

“Is the boat going just now?”

“To be sure it is; do you not hear

noise of the paddles? It set off very early this morning, indeed before the sun had risen."

"Were you out of bed, papa, when it started?"

"Yes, and mamma too; and we had a little walk while you were sleeping."

"Where did you go?"

"Not very far away; we did not go out of the boat. The sailors were making ready to sail, but it was so very dark that they passed before us like ghosts; and we with our cloaks drawn round us must have looked like two ghosts standing still."

"And then what did you do?"

"After a little, we came down-stairs again, but as I did not feel sleepy, I wrote a letter to my sister."

"Is she our sister, too?"

"No. She is your aunt, and your good friend."

"Is she our kind friend?"

“Yes, my dears. Was she not very happy when she was with you, and were you not delighted to stay with her?”

“Yes.”

“Well, those whom we love and who love us are our friends. Who is your best friend?”

“It is you.”

“It is mamma.”

“We are your good friends, but there is a much better one than us. It is He who has said, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me,’ and who laid his hands upon their heads and blessed them. It is the Lord Jesus.”

“And what are you doing with that paper?”

“I am writing.”

“Have you been writing a pretty story for us?”

“It is the letter I have written to your aunt. Would you like me to read it to you?”

“ Yes, yes ! ”

“ ‘ ON BOARD THE “ SIROCCO,” 4 o’clock morning.

‘ DEAR SISTER: I am sure you must often be thinking of us and the little children, and wondering what they are doing, and where they are. Well, I will tell you. In answer to the first question, What they are doing? They are just now fast asleep. From the place where I am sitting I can see them all three, making up for the time they lost last night in the diligence.’

“ Do you know these little children I have just been speaking about ? ”

“ Yes. It is Lily, and Francis, and little Harry.”

“ Yes. You are right.

‘ Till now they have not been at all troublesome, and have been quite contented, though they were obliged to do without the little comforts which cannot be had on a journey.’ ”

“ Oh, what a beautiful tree has just passed ! ”

“ It is not the tree which passed before us, but we who pass before the tree. Listen, children.

‘Francis is always lively. He notices everything, — trees, sheep, the smoke which smokes, as he says; he admires them all. Lily is only amused for a minute or two. She never loses sight of the end of our journey, and is always asking if we shall soon be at Geneva.

‘Harry, with his prattle, and smiles, and screams of delight, gives a holiday air to our journey. He is a little bird which tells us that spring is coming.’”

“Where is the little bird, papa?”

“There he is, fast asleep. It is your little brother.”

“Why do you call him a bird? Birds have wings, and little Harry has none.”

“He is not like the birds that fly in the air, but I have called him a bird because he is so good, and tries to sing like them.

“I shall go on with my letter.

‘We find spring everywhere on our journey. It is in these flowery meadows, in these warm sunbeams which come down from a cloudless sky, in these fresh green leaves, which seem to grow while we are looking at them, in the song of that nightingale which I hear while I am writing. “A nightingale!” you will perhaps say. “I wonder that little voice is not terrified, drowned by the

READING-ROOM
 MARCY AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH,
 BROOKLYN, N. Y.

noise of the wheels, the rushing of the ways, the cries of the sailors. Are you not in a steamboat? Yes, but the steamer has been at anchor since one o'clock in the morning.

“ You do not know what I mean when I say the boat is at anchor. A boat or a ship is at anchor when it is fastened firmly by its anchor, so that it cannot move from the same place. Can we say that Francis is at anchor? No. Why? Because he is never still for a moment. Come, my boy, be quiet for a very little, till I finish the letter.

‘I have just been up-stairs for a moment to find out where we are. I cannot tell you very exactly our position, but we are lying in a most beautiful bend of the river. The two banks which are very close to each other, are covered with rich green grass and trees, as far as one can see by the light of the stars. Towards the east we can just see the dim outline of the hills rising one above the other into high, gloomy mountains, behind which the dawn of the twenty-fifth of April is beginning to appear. On the opposite side, as far as the eye can reach, there are dark and light spots to be seen. The dark spots are the land.

and the light ones are the Rhone, which is hidden by the land, and comes into view again a little further on. But——”

“That is not a pretty story.”

“It is too long.”

“Very well; I shall not trouble you with any more of it.

“Bring the children’s breakfast. They like stories, but I think just now their breakfast would please them better. The air of the Rhone seems to give them an appetite. Make haste, for I wish to show you a bridge. It is the largest one on the Rhone, but the arches are so very narrow that the steamers sometimes can scarcely pass through them, especially when they are going up, as ours is doing, because the current rushing through the narrow arch is very rapid.”

“We have done breakfast.”

“Well, come up-stairs and you shall see the bridge.”

“Oh, what a large bridge! I see carts passing over it, and little boys standing looking at us.”

“These are not little boys, but men as big as papa. They only appear to be little because you are a long way from them. There is a man climbing up the side of the boat.”

“Where does he come from?”

“From the town of Pont St. Esprit.”

“What is he going to do?”

“To guide the boat. He is a pilot.”

“Why does he call out so?”

“Because just now he has charge of the boat, and if he did not speak very loud the men would not hear what he says, for in this narrow passage the Rhone makes a terrible noise. See how the people are running up and down on deck. I should like to show you the bridge a little nearer, but I am afraid we should be in the way of the sailors. Let us keep quiet in this

corner. See, there are several sailors dragging a rope this way."

"What are they going to do?"

"One end of that rope is fastened to a post fixed on the bridge; and see, they are going to tie the other end of it to the side of the boat."

"Why?"

"When a gentleman comes off his horse to go into a house for a few minutes, does he not fasten the reins to a tree, or to a ring fixed in the wall?"

"Yes."

"Do you know why he does so?"

"To keep the horse from running away."

"Well, the boat is kept from being carried away by the current by that rope which is fastened to a strong post on the bridge. Now the engines are going again; the wheels are turning round. We are off once more. We have passed the dan-

gerous part. The bridge was before us a few minutes ago, and now there it is behind us. The pilot is going to leave us now."

"How will he get out of the boat?"

"The same way that he came in. You will see in a little while. The captain pays him; that is only right; he has had a great deal of trouble. For nearly an hour he has been giving orders to the men; now to the men who have charge of the engines, and now to the sailors or to the men on the bridge. His eye was everywhere, and he is so very strong that he did as much as two of the other men. There he is going away. Look at him. He is going out of that opening in the side of the boat."

"Is he going to throw himself into the water?"

"Oh, no, not at all. Do you see a little boat at the side of our large boat? It

looks so very tiny that one might think a breath of wind would upset it. There is the pilot in it already. He unfastens it; the current carries it away. It glides and bounds over the waves like one of your little paper boats."

"Will the pilot come back again?"

"He will come back to-morrow, and every day, to guide the other boats which are going up the river, but we shall not see him, as we are going to Geneva."

CHAPTER X.

THE INUNDATION.

“WE shall very soon lose sight of the bridge. Look at it once more ; it is worth the trouble. From where we are standing we can see the full length of it, although some of the arches are half hidden behind tufts of grass.”

“Papa, there is not water under all the arches.”

“No, my dear, the Rhone runs only under the arches which are near the town, but sometimes it flows over that side where you see nothing but gravel just now. We might say that it likes to change its bed.”

“Has it a bed to rest on ? ”

“Not like the one you slept on last night, — the water is never tired, it does not need to rest or sleep. The bed of a river is the ground over which it usually flows.

“I told you that the Rhone often changes its bed, but it does not do so for the same reasons that we change ours. When we leave a place, it is to get what we think a better one. A minute ago Lily was seated on that coil of ropes, but it appears she was not very comfortable, as she has taken a seat on her mamma’s lap instead. But a river changes its bed because it is obliged to do so.”

“How is it obliged?”

“I shall explain it to you. The torrents which rush down to the Rhone carry with them stones and sand, which fall to the bottom, and as the bottom of the river fills up by degrees, the water spreads itself over the lowest parts. It happens some-

times that the Rhone covers all the gravel which you see, and passes under all the arches of the bridge."

"Oh, have you ever seen that?"

"I have seen it, but a long time ago."

"Were you in a steamboat?"

"It was before there were any steamboats. I was a little boy at the time."

"Like me?"

"Oh, older and bigger than you! I was spending a few weeks in the town of Pont St. Esprit. I liked very much to walk by the side of the river, and one day I found myself with one of my companions on the dike. Do you know what a dike is?"

"No."

"I know."

"Well, let us hear, my boy."

"It is a — a — a — dike."

"I thought you did not know. A dike is a very thick wall which is built by the sides of rivers to keep the water from run-

destroyed, and that oxen and sheep, and even a baby's cradle, had been seen floating down the river."

"Was there a little baby in it?"

"I am not very sure. Every one ran to the bridge, and I was not the last to go. But a great many people came back after they had walked a few steps on it."

"Why?"

"Because it shook under our feet, just as our own house in Marseilles did when a cart passed in the street. It was said, too, that the bridge at Ardeche had been washed away, and that the one you see there would soon be in pieces. As I was not afraid, I stood on the bridge, and bent my head over the parapet, which is the name given to the walls of a bridge, which are built to keep people from falling into the water. Have you ever seen in the harbor at Marseilles little boys climbing up to the tops of the masts on ladders made of rope?"

“Yes, I remember we saw one who was so high up that he looked like a little child.”

“There are ladders of wood quite as long on the bridge of St. Esprit, and sailors who are in a hurry to get down to the river, or to get up from it, take that way of getting up and down. It was on these same ladders, shaken by the waves, that I saw men go down that day, till they were quite close to the water. Each of them had in his hand a long pole, with a hook and a sharp point at the end, and they kept watching for the pieces of wood and other things which were floating down with the current. When anything came within reach, they took hold of it with their hook, and dragged it to them; but sometimes it was so large and heavy that they could scarcely pull it out, and more than once I have seen these strong boatmen totter, and nearly fall, with the things

they were trying to catch. The islands you see there, and these beautiful green trees were buried under the water. All round there was nothing to be seen but a great yellow sea, with trees and planks of wood, pieces of furniture, and all manner of things floating on its surface. It was, I assure you, a very sad sight."

"Why?"

"Because everything which the Rhone carried away was so much lost to some poor person."

"We should give them something."

"They do not need anything now; but at that time those who had lost nothing thought, like you, Lily, that they should help those who had. They helped them to rebuild their houses, gave them corn to sow their fields, and after a few years, one could not tell where the inundation had been; but the people who saw all that they had, carried away by the water, often

think of that time. And it is well that they should do so. Can you tell me why?"

"No."

"I shall tell you some other time."

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPEAKING-TRUMPET — RECOLLECTIONS — THE FAIR.

“LILY, Francis, come on deck !”

“Did you call us, papa ?”

“Yes.”

“What a very loud voice you have !”

“As I was on deck, and you were below in the saloon, I came to the top of the stairs and spoke to you through this tube.”

“Do it again.”

“Lily and Francis, come up-stairs ; I wish to show you a country which I love, because it is my native country. Do you hear ?”

“Oh, yes. Again !”

“That is enough for the present. You

don't know what this tube is called. It is like a trumpet. It is called a speaking-trumpet, because we can speak through it as loud as the blowing of a trumpet. Come here, Lily; put your mouth to it and call your brother."

"Francis!"

"Now, Francis, it is your turn. Call your sister."

"Lily!"

"You have spoken very loud."

"Papa, will you buy me a speaking-trumpet?"

"I shall take good care not to do that. You make enough of noise with your voice as it is. But perhaps you think it is only a toy put there to amuse children?"

"Yes."

"Oh, no, my dears; it is of great use in this boat. You have seen the captain speak from one end of the deck to some of the men at the other end of it, and you

could hear him quite well, because it was calm weather; but sometimes the wind blows with great fury, and the waves make a dreadful noise, and if the captain at such a time should have an order to give, would not his voice be drowned by the louder voices of the wind and the waves?"

"What does he do then?"

"He speaks through this trumpet, and every one hears him."

"What did you wish to show us?"

"A pretty town, but we cannot see it yet. You see that white road where the carriages are driving, and where the clouds of dust are flying; when I was a little boy I often walked on that road, climbed that hill which you see on the other side of it, and paid many a visit to the ruins of that old tower. I could tell the names of all the villages on the Rhone, and of the villages in the valleys too. When I was young, I heard them so often spoken of,

that now, when I hear the name of any of them, it sounds to me like the name of a friend. But you cannot understand how it is that I feel both glad and sorry when I see this part of the country again. I wonder where all the friends are who once ran about these woods and hills with me ! In a little village at the foot of that hill to which I am pointing, there lives one of those children who, like you, used to be always laughing and jumping about ; but she is now lying in bed very ill, and I fear she may never get better. And my mother, who would have loved you so much if she had known you, — my good mother who was always watching over me, — where is she ? ”

“ You told us she was in heaven.”

“ Yes, my darlings ; and she has now no more pain or sorrow, — she is at rest. Your little cousin, too, who is now lying ill, will soon go and join my mother in the rest

which is prepared by the Lord Jesus for his people. I hope that we, too, may go to heaven some day ; but while we are here, let us try to have a heavenly spirit ; let us love God, and let us be like him, — kind to every one.

“ We are coming near the town which I wish you to see. Look what crowds of people are on the road ! ”

“ Where is the road ? ”

“ Quite near us. That hill looks as if it would fall down on our boat, it hangs over the river so much. One would think that a goat could not find room between the water and the hill for its little foot ; and yet, see ! there is a good road there, I assure you.”

“ Ah ! there are sheep passing ! ”

“ Yes, there is a large flock of sheep.”

“ Are the shepherds taking them to some place where they will have fresh grass ? ”

“ No, my dear. I see the farmers have

their best coats on ; they are going to the town to sell their sheep. See ! there is a little boy standing looking at us ; he does not notice that his father and his mother have gone on with the sheep. Now he does, and begins to run to make up to them. Poor little boy, he has tumbled, but he has not hurt himself, for there he is up again. He has rubbed the dust off his clothes, and is beginning to run again. I am sure he is very happy to go to the town."

" There is another flock ! and now, look, there are pigs ! See ! two of them have one of their feet tied to a string, which the woman who is leading them holds in her hand. Why are their feet tied ? It will hurt them."

" Oh, no ; they must be tied to keep them from running away. There is one which would have fallen into the water if it had not been kept back by the rope

round its foot. These two men on mules, who look so proud as they trot along, have frightened the poor pigs. There are more people all going to the same place."

"Where are they?"

"In a little boat. They are coming across the Rhone. They are quite near. The boatman is rowing with all his might, but the current is helping him. There they are; there are two women and three little sheep. See how narrow their boat is; that is the best shape for getting easily through the water. This is the same shape, though it is longer. But boats of this kind could not stand the sea; the slightest wind would upset them."

"That one is going to be upset. Oh, the people will be drowned!"

"No, no, my dears; the tiny boat has only got into the waves which the paddles of our boat have made. Now it has got past the waves; it is quite safe"

“Do you know where all these people are going?”

“They are going to the fair.”

“What is a fair?”

“It is a place where a great many people sell and buy. They sell sheep, oxen, mules, indeed, all sorts of things, — cloth for dresses, leather for shoes, books, toys, sugar-plums. Children often wish to go to fairs, but their parents, who know better than they do, will not allow it; for there is often a great deal at fairs that children should not see or hear. Wherever a great many people are gathered together, there are always some wicked people among them; and it is much better for children to keep away from hearing wicked words or seeing wrong things. If they were to be accustomed to such things, they might soon learn to do them.”

CHAPTER XII.

A FISHER OF TO-DAY AND A FISHER LONG AGO.

“THERE is a man in a little boat! is he going to the fair too?”

“No, my dear; do you not see that the boat is always in the same place? It is fastened to the shore. The man is a fisherman.”

“Is he catching fish?”

“Yes. Watch him for a little; he has a long pole in his hand, with a net fastened to the end of it; there he has put it into the water, now he draws it up; but there are no fish in the net. He puts it down again; let us see if he will be more fortunate this time. No, the net is empty.

Down once more ; nothing yet. Poor fisherman ! he is wearying himself for no use. Perhaps he has been here since the morning, out in the burning sun. I see he has not got even one little fish in his boat. Any other person would have lost patience, and given it up long ago ; but he waits on in hope. He has tried it for the fourth time, and it seems with no better success, for he has put the net into the water again. We cannot see him any longer. Good-by, fisherman ; we wish you may catch some before you go home, as a reward for all the trouble you have taken ; but whether you do or not, remember that God is with you, and put your trust in Him."

"Is God with that fisherman ?"

"Yes, my darling."

"Is he with us, too ?"

"Oh, yes, he is."

"I do not see him."

"He sees you."

“But how can I know that he sees me?”

“Well, listen, and I will tell you a little story. Several fishermen were sitting together one evening, and one of them said, ‘I go a fishing.’ He rose up. His friends rose at the same time, and they all set off together. They got into their boat and worked hard all night, but caught nothing.”

“Do people fish in the night?”

“Yes, dear.”

“But they cannot see well!”

“It is all the better. If the fishes could see, they would not come near the nets, nor let themselves be caught in them so easily. The story which I am telling you, happened two thousand years ago. Well, the fishermen at Marseilles do just as the fishermen of Galilee did; they go out to fish at night, and come back in the morning.

“These poor men, as I told you, had been out the whole night, but had not caught one single fish. Morning came, but, patient like the fisher we have just seen, they were still at work, hoping always that the next throw of the net would bring them something. Suddenly a man appeared at the side of the water.”

“What did he do?”

“He turned to them and said, ‘Children, have you any fish?’ They said, ‘No.’ Although they had been out all night, they had not one fish, not even the smallest thing. This man said to them, ‘Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ They put it down, and it was soon so heavy with the number of fishes in it, that they could not pull it up again.

“Do you know who this man was?”

“No.”

“One of the fishers guessed, and said,

‘It is the Lord.’ Another fisherman, called Peter, on hearing that, threw himself into the sea, that he might get the sooner to his Lord.”

“And then what happened?”

“Those who remained in the boat came to the shore, dragging the net filled with fishes. So before they saw the Lord Jesus, he saw them. He saw them when they were in the house, when they were on their way to fish, and when they were in the boat. Every time they cast their net into the sea, and drew it up empty, the Lord saw them. Like you, my dear, they thought they were alone; but the eye of their Master was on them. I am quite sure that they never forgot that night; and afterwards, when they were ill, or poor, or in prison, do you think that they were sad and without any hope? No; they said, ‘The Lord is with us, as he was that night we were out fishing. We do

not see him, but he sees us.' And they had no fear.

"Ah ! there, at last, is the town which I wished you to see. Here is the landing-place ; the bell is ringing. What crowds of people are running to see the boat arrive !"

"Are these people your friends ?"

"Oh no ; I have not so many. Not one of them knows me, and I don't know any of them. My friends did not know we were to pass this morning, or they might have come to see us."

"Shall we go to see them ?"

"The boat would go away without us. It only stops a few minutes to take in or land passengers. There are people coming to sell things, but they take care not to come to our end of the boat."

"Why ?"

"Because they are afraid the boat might carry them away. I was sailing down the Rhone some years ago, and the boat stop-

ped a few minutes just as it has done now. A woman selling cherries came on board, and while she was bargaining with a gentleman who wished to purchase all she had in her basket, the paddles began to move. The poor woman rushed to the side of the boat where she had come in; it was too late. She began to weep; she begged the captain to stop the boat and let her out; it was all in vain. Some of the passengers thought he had played her a very clever trick, and laughed at the poor woman.

“ It was very wicked of them to do so, because the woman was very poor. She lost half a day; and besides, she had left several little children at home, who needed their mother to give them their dinner, and take them to school.

“ Well, do you know what we did? The passengers who were very sorry for the poor woman gathered a little money for her,

and put it into her hand as she went out of the boat, to help her to get back to Valence."

"Was she pleased?"

"Oh, very much so."

"We only a few minutes ago stopped; and see, we are going off again already. Look what a crowd of people are buying and selling. The people who are bringing things to sell are standing on shore, and the people who wish to buy are standing at the side of the boat. They are throwing the money and the things for sale into the air backwards and forwards, at the risk of everything falling into the Rhone. The boat is moving. There is a man leaning forward to catch a bunch of radishes which some one is holding out to him. They have in vain stretched out their arms from each side, their hands cannot reach each other, there is a gap between them. Now the passenger will have his radishes; the

woman has thrown them into the boat, and he has thrown some coppers to her on the quay. The quay seems to go away with all the people on it, and the town will soon be out of sight. Good-bye, Valence! Now, children, come to dinner."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BARGES — THE MEETING OF THE RHONE AND THE ISERE.

“PAPA, there are horses in a barge.”

“They are going down the river, and we are going up.”

“They do not move at all.”

“No, they are ranged in a line, and keep their places like soldiers under arms.”

“There is one putting down his head. He is drinking some of the water of the Rhone.”

“The water reaches to his very mouth ; it touches the deck of the barge ; it looks as if it would go into it. But that would be a sad thing. There is a little in it which

has got in through the joints in the wood, and do you see what the bargeman is doing? He is busy lifting the water in a kind of bowl, and pouring it out as fast as he can. And do you know why the captain has made the engine be stopped while we are passing?"

"No."

"Because the waves made by the paddles of our boat might have rushed into the barge and made it sink."

"I should like to see the horses again."

"Perhaps we shall see some more as we go on."

"Where are they going?"

"To Beaucaire."

"What are they going to do there?"

"You shall know by and by."

"Lily, mamma is calling you; she wishes to show you something at the other side of the boat. I shall stay here with Francis;

he is looking out for a barge, so if you should see one you will tell us."

"O papa, how dirty the water is!"

"No, papa, it is not dirty."

"It is muddy, like that we had at dinner."

"It is quite clear."

"Mamma, is that water not muddy?"

"Yes, Lily, it is."

"Papa, is that water not clear?"

"Yes, my little man."

"Francis, mamma says that it is muddy."

"Lily, papa says that it is clear."

"It is muddy."

"It is clear."

"That is not true."

"It is true."

"Children, I wish you to change places. Francis, you will go to your mamma; Lily, come beside me. Look!"

"It is clear just now!"

"And you, Francis, how do you see it?"

“That water is muddy.”

“Lily, give me your hand ; we shall go and sit down beside mamma and Francis. But what is the meaning of this ? The water is clear on one side and muddy on the other ! As the boat goes on its beautiful color comes back. We only see a few whitish spots like little clouds in a clear blue sky, and even these, you see, are all away now.

“But you don’t understand it, do you ?

“Well, do you see that river to the right, rolling its muddy waves, it looks as if it were coming to us ? That is the Isere ; it has mixed its waters with the blue waters of the Rhone, and made them muddy.

“But when Lily went beside her mamma, the waters of the two rivers were not yet mixed together ; there was muddy water on Lily’s side, and clear water on Francis’ side ; the meeting of the waters was under our boat. The children, then, were both right.

But they were wrong in saying to each other that they were not telling the truth. They must remember that things seem very unlike when they are looked at from different places."

"Papa, I see one, two, three steamboats."

"Are you speaking of these barges near the shore? These are not steamboats."

"But I have seen smoke."

"That may be; the men must have a fire to cook their dinners. These barges don't go so fast as our boat; they seem as if they were standing still; we must look at them a long time before we can see that they are going at all. Do you know what drives them on?"

"No."

"Have they paddles?"

"No; there are no paddles."

"Or sails?"

"No."

"Or rowers?"

“No ; there are no rowers. They go quite alone.”

“Oh no ; if they were alone they would not go up the river, they would go down. Do you not remember that this morning, when our boat stopped for a few minutes, we threw a cork into the water ? Did it go up the river against the running water ?”

“No ; it floated away down towards Marseilles.”

“Oh yes ; I remember you said to it,—
‘A pleasant voyage, cork.’”

“And an instant afterwards we lost sight of it ; did we not ? But if we had fastened a piece of cord to the cork, and given it to Lily to hold in her hand, would it have sailed away down to Marseilles ?”

“No ; I would have pulled it, and it would have come to Geneva with me.”

“Well ! what we did for the cork, others have done for these barges.”

“But I do not see the cord.”

“It is not a piece of cord, but a rope, or rather several ropes joined together, which is called a cable.”

“And who pulls it? A man?”

“No; a man would not be strong enough. Look over there.”

“I see horses; what a great many! I shall count them. One, two, three, four, five, — there are nineteen. They have been resting a few minutes. Now they are off again. Some on the horse path, and the others are walking in the water.”

“They will be drowned.”

“Oh no, they are good swimmers, and they always keep close to the bank.”

“How hard they are pulling!”

“Do you hear the cries of the men who are driving them on?”

“The horses pull the cable, and make the water splash round it as it is stretched tight. And now, could you guess the use

of these horses which have just passed us going down the Rhone in a barge ? ”

“ I don't know.”

“ They are going to Beaucaire, to drag boats like those you see just now to Lyons. So these horses are never away from the Rhone ; when they have gone up the river they go down just to go up again. Would you like to be in one of those barges ? You would find it very pleasant ; there is no noise ; and they move on so smoothly that you can scarcely feel that they are moving at all. And then in the barge mamma would have time to draw these mills and bridges, and trees, and castles, for you, of which you would like so much to have a picture, but which our boat is now passing by so quickly.

“ But then the passage would be a little longer, and I know you think it long enough as it is, for you are always asking if we have not come to Geneva yet.”

“How long would it be if we were dragged by these horses?”

“They have been on the way twenty-two days already, and it will be eight more before they reach Lyons; so it is much better for us to stay where we are, for tomorrow, if it is God’s will, we shall be at the end of our journey.”



CHAPTER XIV.

THE RAFTS.

“How fast we are going! The barges and the horses are far away from us already. We are going farther and farther into this long, narrow valley. That hill looks as if it would stop us altogether. Shall we have to get out of the boat and climb it, to get to the other side?”

“No. The Rhone makes a bend, which leads us into another valley. These low walls which wind round the hills, like a winding stair, are made to keep the earth upon the rocks from being washed away by the rain. The hills are bare just now, but a month after this they will be covered

all over with a beautiful green ; for vines are grown there. We shall soon pass under the first iron bridge on the Rhone. In the meantime, I wish you to see a boat not like any you have ever seen before."

"Where is it?"

"There it is, passing by us on that side."

"It is not a boat, it is a floor."

"Yes ; it is very like a floor."

"Tell me, children, if we were upon one bank of the Rhone at the foot of these large trees, and Geneva was upon the opposite side, how could we get to it?"

"I would ask grandmamma to come for us."

"But she would neither see nor hear you."

"We should cross the river by a bridge."

"Oh that would be easy enough ; but if there were no bridge, nor barge, nor steamboat, how could we reach it? I could swim across, and so could Carlo ; but you

cannot swim, and I should not like to leave you."

"I would make a steamboat."

"You could not do that, my boy. Where would you get these large pieces of wood which you would need, and if you had them, how could you carry them away? And the boilers and the engines, they are not to be found all ready made. You would need to go a long way and dig deep in the earth before you could get iron, and perhaps you would not find any at all; but even if you had it, would you be able to cut it, or beat it out, or round it, or drill it? You would not be able to make even the smallest nail.

"And you, Lily, how would you get across the river?"

"I would make a little boat."

"You are more modest than your brother, but your plan would not succeed any better, even although I were to help you. To make the smallest boat you would need

to have a carpenter's tools,—hatchets, saws, nails, planes, &c. ; and even if you had all these, would you be able to make use of them ? ”

“ I might perhaps be able to cut down a tree, and after a great deal of time and trouble, saw it into logs ; but would that be enough ? ”

“ Certainly not. You would need to put these logs together, bend other large pieces of wood, and make both sides the very same, so that the boat would not lean more to one side than the other.

“ It would not be easy to do that ; and besides, it would take too much time. As for me, I would not think of building either a steamboat or a barge. Do you know what I would do ? I would cut down a few poplar or willow trees, you would help your mother to break off the branches, and I would make use of them as a rope to tie the trunks together, and there would be my boat !

“ Simple boats like these are called rafts. And in one thing they are better than any other kind of ships—they cannot founder, which means that they cannot go to the bottom.”

“ I should like you to make me a little raft.”

“ But in some things they are not so good as other boats, and I must tell you what they are. It is more difficult to steer them than it is to steer a common boat ; one needs a great deal of skill to guide them over some parts of the Rhone ; but the worst thing about them is, that these logs, if they do not go to the bottom they very easily come separate. Sometimes a knock against one of the arches of a bridge is enough to break the ropes which tie the logs of a raft together, and loosen them one from the other.”

“ What happens then ? ”

“ The goods which happen to be on the

raft fall into the water and are lost, and the men are in great danger of being drowned if they are not very quick in catching hold of one of the logs, and keeping afloat in this manner till help come to them."

"Shall we see any more rafts?"

"I don't think we shall; they are not used so much now, because it has been found that they are the cause of a great many accidents. One of the most dangerous places in the river was the bridge of St. Esprit. I have seen more than one raft dashed to pieces against it. I shall tell you about it some other time."

CHAPTER XV.

THE BRIDGE AND THE FERRY-BOATS.

“PAPA, is that the bridge which you wished to show us?”

“Yes, my dear.”

“It is not very pretty.”

“No. We have seen some much prettier ones. At Avignon, Bourg, Saint-Andéal, Valence, the bridges are much more elegant, but they are not more useful.

“Why do people make bridges? That they may pass over the river, is it not?”

“Yes.”

“Well, when a bridge is strong enough and broad enough to allow people and carriages or carts to pass easily, it is all that

is wanted. That bridge was very much wanted. You see these two little towns,—the one to the right is Tain, that to the left is Tournon; they are built exactly opposite each other. Before the bridge was made the people who lived in these towns, which you see are very near each other, could not cross every time they might wish to do so. They could see one another, and even bow to one another, from the opposite sides; but there was always the Rhone between them to prevent them from shaking hands.

“It is true they could cross the river in a boat, but that was not so convenient, and could not be done at all hours of the day and night. Now, this bridge is just like a street. Tain and Tournon are now joined, and are like parts of the same town. You can imagine it was a happy sight for them to see the work going on,—the bridge rising out of the water and grow-

ing by degrees. And the day the bridge was finished was kept as a holiday by them. At that time this suspension bridge was thought to be very beautiful, because, as I told you, it was the first iron bridge on the Rhone. It was talked of in all the towns and villages, and many people came a long way to see it.

“ But our boat which stopped a few minutes to take in coals, is going off again. Take care, stay beside me ! The funnel will be lowered immediately to let the boat pass under the bridge. See, there is the funnel slowly coming down ! What a large mouth, and what a quantity of smoke ! It is as if we were in a cloud. Now they are raising it ; but it will be down again in a minute.”

“ Why ? ”

“ Because we have to pass under another bridge.”

“ I do not see it.”

“That is because you think it is a bridge like that one you have just passed. You are looking for arches, for iron chains; but there is nothing of the kind. It is a rope bridge.”

“Could a cart pass over it?”

“No.”

“Or a horse?”

“No.”

“Could Francis stand on it?”

“Yes, papa.”

“I don’t think you could; however, we shall try if you could do it or not. Here is a thick rope with which the sailors keep hold of the helm,—let us fasten it to that pin in the side of the boat; I shall hold the other end of it, and pull it with all my might, so that it may be well stretched. There it is. Now, Francis, my boy, get up on this rope; it is not very high,—you can put your foot on it with a very little trouble. You have still one foot on the

deck, and you are shaking; you keep hold of me!"

"I cannot do it."

"Mamma, put this little boy on the rope, take his hand and make him walk to the end of it. He must find out by trying it that it is more difficult to walk on a rope than he thought it was.

"You see, my boy, that in two steps you have slipped four or five times, although you had hold of us on each side. What would it be, then, if you were to try to walk alone on that high and long rope bridge? You would immediately fall into the water.

"But, perhaps, you don't know why this rope is put across the Rhone? I will tell you. When there is no bridge over a river, how do people get across?"

"They take a boat."

"Yes. You are thinking of these two pretty little towns which we have left be-

hind us. When there was no bridge and no rope, those who wished to go to the other side got into a boat. But what happened? The boat which set off from Tain was carried away by the current, and when it reached the other side it was a long way below Tournon. Then, to prevent that, do you know what was done? There was a high pole fixed on each side of the Rhone, and a rope fastened to each, well stretched, and that was the bridge. That was not all; but you will understand better what more I have to tell you when you see another of these bridges. I think we shall very soon see one.

“ Yes, I am right. The rope is still too far away for you to see it; but do you not see something over there where my finger is pointing to ? ”

“ I see a boat.”

“ It is standing still, is it not? Can you tell me why it does not come down to us ? ”

“ I don't know.”

“ Do you not see that it is kept back by a rope ? And that rope, what is it fastened to ? ”

“ To a tree ? ”

“ No.”

“ To a stone ? ”

“ No. It is fastened to that rope bridge which crosses the Rhone.”

“ Papa, there is a horse and a cart in that boat.”

“ There is a workman, too, with a sack on his back, and two women sitting in the bottom of the boat. These people wish to get to the other side of the river.”

“ They are not moving.”

“ Because the boatman is waiting till our boat has passed ; he would not like our boat to run against his. See, he is beginning to row now ; just as the boat glides over the water the rope slips along the bridge ; the rope and the ferry-boat go on at the same time.”

“What is a ferry-boat?”

“That is the name given to boats which carry people from one side of the river to the other.”

“And if the rope bridge should break?”

“Then the ferry-boat would be carried away by the current. And it would be very troublesome to get it back again. When we were coming back from Geneva, about a year and a half ago, we saw an accident of that kind; it happened a little below where we are now.

“Where are we just now?”

“We have just passed two little villages, — *Serriere* and *Sablons*, — opposite each other on the river. Do you not remember I pointed out to you that all the houses are new? Four years ago the Rhone carried them away, and they have been built again quite as near the water as they were before.

“As I told you before, the rain had been pouring down for several days, and the Rhone rose very high. We were going

faster than we are doing just now, because we were going down. Suddenly one of the men called out, There is a boat at the bridge ; but the rope was not high enough for our boat to pass under it, and it was not low enough to let it pass over it ; it blocked up the way. The sailors began to cry out with all their might, Ahoy ! ahoy ! But no one appeared on the shore, and we were going very fast. Then the passengers got frightened ; they thought the rope was going to upset the boat, or sweep away everything on deck ; they threw themselves down on their faces. But what happened ?”

“ Did the rope stop the boat ? ”

“ No. It was not strong enough to do that. The boat dragged the rope, and in a moment the high posts at each end of it were torn up and thrown down, and the bridge was gone.”

“ Is there not one now ? ”

“ Oh, it was soon put up again, I think. But, although that accident did not do much harm, we were very sorry for it, for the captain told us that the bridge belonged to a poor man, who was obliged to pay for putting it up again, when he had scarcely enough money to buy bread for his family.”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MOUNTAINS.

“ANOTHER night is passed! You are wearying, I fear, my darlings; but here are plenty of things to amuse you. There are your painted bricks. You may build palaces, churches, and castles, and when you are tired playing with them, you can go and look out at the cabin windows, where you will see beautiful fields, and trees and houses as we sail along. Each of you may take a window at opposite sides of the boat, and then you can tell each other what you see as we pass. Sometimes it will be grassy banks with tall poplars growing on them, — mills with wheels turn-

ing round, — little bridges crossing the streams which are rushing away down to the Rhone, — or boats filled with horses or goods. And when you are tired of looking out of the window in the saloon, you may go and walk on deck, and every few minutes you will see something new and beautiful. Have you counted all the bridges at which the funnel has had to be let down, so that our boat might pass under them ? ”

“ Yes, papa.”

“ How many have we passed ? ”

“ Three.”

“ Three, that is not many. But I rather think that you cannot count more than three, my little Francis. Do you remember all the towns we have seen on the side of the water, — Avignon, St. Esprit, Bourg, St. Andéal, Valence, Tournon, St. Vallin ? And these hills covered with vines, and these corn-fields and mead-

ows, looking at a distance like carpets of all colors? And these castles in ruins, and these old towers, standing like sentinels on the tops of the hills? Is not all that very beautiful? But you would like to be at Geneva, and I am sure you will be very glad when we can say to you, there it is."

"Can you see it from here?"

"No. There is a screen of hills between us and it."

"The hills are not a screen."

"No, my dear; but they get that name because they hide what is behind them just as a curtain or a screen does."

"We must draw this curtain."

"It is not so easy to draw it as a window curtain. A little child can open a window curtain, but no one can open or move a screen of hills but God who made them and put them there."

"And why does he not take it away?"

“Because there is no need for doing so.”

“But we wish to pass, and these hills are in our way.”

“Oh, don’t trouble yourself, we shall find a way. We must first go up and then down the other side, and after we have gone up and down the hills a good many times, we shall be at Geneva, if it please God.”

“I do not like these naughty mountains that hinder us from seeing far.”

“Yet they are very beautiful, are they not? They are so high, they look as if they were touching the sky; their tops are covered with snow. But besides, they are very useful. Do you know that if there were no mountains there would be no steamboats like this one?”

“Why?”

“What is this deck made of on which we are walking?”

“Of wood.”

“A great deal of wood and many large trees are needed to make a boat like this ; and where do the tall fir-trees grow which mamma has so often told you about ? Do you know ?”

“No. Where is it ?”

“They grow on high places, high up on the mountain’s sides. If there were no mountains there would be no fir-trees, and if there were no fir-trees there would be no steamboats like this.”

“Then we should go in a coach.”

“But coaches, too, are made of wood, and very often of fir. There would be neither coaches nor boats.”

“I should take a horse.”

“Very good, my boy ; but to ride on a horse you would need to learn to keep yourself on it. And even after you were a good rider, it would not be easy to travel in that way. Such a little boy as you are would soon get tired of being shaken

on the horse's back. Your arm and your hand would be weary with holding the bridle ; and when you got to the inn where you were to rest for the night, you would very likely be more tired than your horse.

“ But I have something more to tell you. To ride on horseback you must first have a horse, must you not ? Well, perhaps you might not have one.”

“ Why ? ”

“ Do you know what horses are fed on ? ”

“ On hay.”

“ And who makes the hay grow ? ”

“ The good God.”

“ Yes. It is he who gives the sun and the rain to make it spring. But the rain which falls from the clouds is not enough ; the meadows are watered in another way.”

“ Oh yes, by the rivers.”

“ And the rivers, where do they come from ? You don't know ; they come from the mountains ; so, if there were no moun-

tains, there would be no rivers ; and if there were no rivers, there would be very little hay ; and if there were little hay, there would be few horses. You see now how useful mountains are."

"Now I love them very much."

"Well, you will see a great many by-and-by, for we shall soon be in a country of mountains."

"Are we not in a country of mountains now ?"

"No, my dears, we only left Condrieux this morning."

"What is Condrieux ?"

"It is a little town ; I thought you knew it. I forgot that you were asleep when the boat started this morning, but last night it stopped in front of the white houses of that village.

"When we arrived there, a number of people were waiting for us on the shore, and the plank had scarcely been put down

from the boat on the quay, when the deck was covered with little children. The sailors took them by the hand and went on shore with them. And what do you think I did? I shall tell you after dinner."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FARM-HOUSE.

“PAPA, you promised to tell us something.”

“Oh, it was about a visit to a farm near the little town of Condrieux. Your little brother wished for a little milk, and I went out to try and get some for him. I did not know where to go; but when I got into one of the streets, I saw a woman standing at the corner of it calling to her little girl, who was singing, and laughing, and dancing with her young companions. Her mother called more than once, — ‘Louise’ come here, my child.’”

‘ Did the little girl come?’ ”

“ No. Perhaps she did not hear her mother call to her, for she did not come. But then I thought, since this woman is a mother, she must love all little children, and perhaps she will be kind enough to tell me where I can buy milk for Lily, and Francis, and Harry. And I was not mistaken ; for she even offered to go with me to a farm where milk was sold, although it was out of the village, and I was a stranger to her. She was very kind and good, and we must try to be like her, for God tells us in the Bible that we must be kind to every one, even if they are strangers to us. The road to the farm was along a pretty footpath, through the fields ; the moon was shining bright ; and we had a pleasant walk.”

“ Were the stars shining too ? ”

“ Yes, the stars were beautiful. After crossing a little wooden bridge, and walking down an avenue of trees, whose branches met at the top and looked like a

green roof over the road, we came to a large gate. The kind woman who was with me opened the gate, and we went into a court. A dog hearing the gate open, came running to meet us, barking very loud."

"Did he bite you?"

"Oh no; he looked very good natured, and I thought his master must be good-natured too."

"Why?"

"Because they had chosen a watch-dog which would not hurt any one. We went up a long flight of stairs, which led to the kitchen; it was clean and tidy; the table was laid for supper; the mother had just taken the soup off the fire, for it was smoking in the plates. The woman who was with me asked if they had any milk to sell. We have very little, answered a young girl, as she placed chairs for us to sit down; but you shall have all that we can give you. She went for a basin of milk, and filling

two large measures with milk, poured it into a bottle ; in doing so, she let some drops fall on the table, and her mother, to make up for what had been spilt, took more milk out of the basin and put it into the bottle.

“ ‘ How much do I owe you ? ’ I said to the farmer’s wife.”

“ ‘ One penny.’ ”

“ ‘ Only a penny, and the bottle is quite full ! It seems that milk is very plentiful here and very scarce some miles further down the river.’ ”

“ ‘ Why so ? ’ said the farmer’s wife.”

“ ‘ Because the landlord of the hotel made us pay much more than that.’ ”

“ ‘ How much did he ask you to pay for a bottle of milk ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Eighteenpence.’ ”

“ ‘ But surely the bottle he gave was larger than this one, sir,’ said the farmer’s wife. ‘ I know there are people

who charge strangers four or five times the price they ought to pay, but we always ask the same price. May God keep us from cheating.' ”

“ ‘I am glad to hear you speak in that way,’ I said to her. ‘You will not lose by trying to please God. He makes them prosper who love him. He will bless your honest labors and give you good crops. May peace rest on your house.’ ”

“The farmer at that moment came in ; he had heard my last words. ‘Thank you, sir,’ he said, and he shook my hand so warmly that if it had been your little hand instead of mine, you would have screamed out.”

“Did he hurt you ? ”

“He did not hurt me, but he pressed my hand very hard. Then I said good-by to these good people, and came back to the village with the kind woman who had been my guide.”

“What is a guide ? ”

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“Did he hurt you?”

“He did not hurt me, but he pressed my hand very hard. Then I said good-by to these good people, and came back to the village with the kind woman who had been my guide.”

“What is a guide?”

“It is a person who shows you the way when you do not know it yourself. As we went back to the village I asked my guide about her family. She told me that her husband and her eldest son were employed in the steamboats on the Saone. The Saone is a river which joins the Rhone below Lyons. ‘My second son works in one of the “Eagle” Company’s boats, and my youngest son is at college. He wishes to be a clergyman.’ ‘My good woman,’ I said to her, ‘since your son wishes to spend his life in telling men about the great love of God, I hope his own heart may be filled with love both to God and man, so that he may be a good servant of Christ.’ I thanked her once more, when I said good-by, and we went on our different ways, — she to her house and I to the boat.”

“And did you see little Louise?”

“What little Louise?”

“The little girl that her mother called.”

“Ah! I had forgotten her. We did not see her again on the shore. It was dark, and she must have gone home.”

“Tell us another story, mamma.”

“I will, at another time.”

“But we wish to hear it now.”

“You are just like baby, you would like to have your story just as he must have his food, — immediately; but as you are older than he is, you must learn to be patient, and wait till mamma pleases to tell you. She is going to write letters now.”

“Oh yes. Will she write a letter for us?”

“Oh yes. She will.”

READING-ROOM,
MARCY AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

often looks at them, because I told her that there were white mountains at Geneva too. The mountain of Veutoux has attracted her attention very much. It is true that at every step we have had a new view to admire ; but this mountain for a great part of the way has crowned all the scenes which have been spread out before us ; it was always to be seen in the distance like a faithful friend, not wishing to go away from us. It is like an immense sugar-loaf, and so reminds us of the Mole at Geneva ; it is half covered with snow, and is now fading away in the distance, till it almost looks like a white cloud.

“ I am writing very early in the morning, my dear friend, hoping to post this letter at Vienne, where we are to stop for a few minutes. Last night we slept at Condrieux. Several hours before we got there, there was a great bustle on deck ; we did not know why the men were all

running about dressed in their best clothes. At last the boat stopped at Condrieux, and we found out why they were all in such a bustle, when we were told that that little town was the native place of almost all the sailors on the Rhone. It was pleasant to look at their happy faces as they saw their wives and children coming to meet them, and in a few minutes there was not one of them to be seen on deck. Some time afterwards, in the evening, when the children had gone to bed, and were fast asleep, my husband proposed that we should go on shore to buy a few trifles we wanted; amongst others, this paper on which I am writing to you. The weather was beautiful; we enjoyed our walk very much. We went through several streets where we met with civil, obliging people. At length we returned to the shore to be near the place where our little darlings were sleeping. Everything was quiet; we

sat down for a little ; the saloon was well lighted, and the windows shone like eyes on the black sides of the boat. But we would not have thought of looking at these little windows, unless we had known that our dear ones were there, for the moon and stars were shining so brightly, that they made every other light seem dull.

“ Oh, how we enjoyed that bright, beautiful evening ! We thought of the goodness of God, who had made that glorious sky ; we spoke of the friends we had left, and of those we hoped soon to meet ; time passed quickly on, and it was getting late. Carlo leaped round about us, as if he wished us to go back to our home in the boat.

“ But I hear Harry moving — he has just awoke ; the little darling will be hungry, for he has been sleeping a long time ; he is stretching out his tiny arms to me already. I must finish this, my dear friend, with kindest love from all.”

CHAPTER XIX.

VIENNE — CHARCOAL — COALS.

“IF you wish to see Vienne, you must make haste ; the boat is to stop for two hours to land some goods. Are you ready to go on shore ? ”

“ Yes, yes.”

“ Give me your hand, then, and we shall go up stairs ? Do you see these men going up and down ? These are porters.”

“ Are they not cold with so few clothes on ? ”

“ No, dear, they would be cold if they were to sit still, or if they walked as slowly as we do ; but look at that one going down into the hold by that ladder.”

“What is he going to do?”

“Come here, and we shall see. He has got down. Another porter puts a load on his back, and now he is coming up again by another ladder; he goes out of the boat by that plank which rests on the quay; he lays down his burden and comes back running for another. See, he is wiping the drops of perspiration off his face with his sleeve. He is very warm.

“If you were cold, would you go and sit down in a corner, and stay there without moving? No, because you would get still colder. You would begin to run like this porter, and rub your hands, and the cold would go away.

“And now, look up, what do you see?”

“A wall.”

“We are too near this wall, it hides the town from us. Perhaps you think it is a very small town, since a wall like that keeps you from seeing anything. Put your

little hand over your eyes ; now, look at me — do you see me, Lily ? ”

“ No.”

“ And do you see me, Francis ? ”

“ No.”

“ Is your hand bigger than papa ? ”

“ No.”

“ And yet it hinders you from seeing him. why ? Because it is quite close to your eyes. Take it away, and hold it as far away from your eyes as you can ; there now, keep it there between your eyes and me. You see me now, don't you ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Why ? Because your hand is away from your eyes. Very well, as soon as we go away from the wall we shall see the town appear by degrees. The work of unloading is done now ; see, the plank has been taken away which allowed the men to get on shore with their burdens.

“ Does not the wall look as if it were

getting smaller, and the houses as if they were growing larger ? ”

“ Yes, yes ; I see a church.”

“ It is a very beautiful church ; your mamma and I went to see it while you were at breakfast.”

“ Were there many people in that church ? ”

“ Yes. There were a number of masons busy repairing it. It is a very long time since it was built, and if it were not repaired it would soon fall to ruins.”

“ There were some people, too, kneeling at prayers. Was the good God in the church to hear the prayers of these people ? ”

“ He is with all who pray to him anywhere. If a little boy or girl should pray to him in a boat, a sick person in bed, a shepherd on the hill-side, or a learned man in his study, he is with them all. You know that he is everywhere, but there is

one place above all others where he loves to be."

"Is it a church?"

"He is in the church, because he has said that wherever two or three are met together to worship him he is there. But I was speaking of another place. Do you know it?"

"No."

"It is your heart and mine. It is God's will that men should build churches where they can meet and pray together to him; but he is more pleased when men and little children give him a place in their hearts."

"Could the good God come into my heart?"

"Not in the way that Lily means, but perhaps in some other way. When you are far away from me, you have a place in my heart; that means that I think of you, speak about you, and love you, and try to please you.

“ If Lily thinks sometimes that God is very good to her, because he has given her a papa and mamma, brothers who love her, clothes and food, and all she needs ; and that he has prepared for her a bright home in the heavens, where he will take her to live, for the sake of what our Lord Jesus has done for her ; if Francis, when he is going to do something naughty, stops and does not do it for fear of displeasing God, and because he loves God so much that he tries very much to please him, — then Lily and Francis give him a place in their hearts.”

“ Where are we now ? ”

“ I don't know ; but I think I see the railway between St. Etienne and Lyons. We must be near Givors. I know it by the grey color of the houses.”

“ Why are they grey ? ”

“ Because they are covered with fine coal dust. There is a great deal of coal in this part of the country.”

“I don’t see any.”

“You are thinking of the charcoal that you saw among the Var hills. That was burnt wood, which is called charcoal, and it is used for fires where coal is scarce. Charcoal is made by men who cut down the trees, and burn the wood till it becomes black, and fit for fuel. Coals also were once growing trees, but they have been thrown down and prepared for burning, not by the hands of man, but by the power of God, who, in his great goodness, has provided great stores of them below the ground, that we may have good fires to keep us warm. Coal is found ready for burning, but as it is buried deep down in the earth, men have to dig very deep pits before they can find it.”

“There are two barges loaded with it.”

“Why?”

“It is going away to parts of the country where there is none to be had — to Valence,

Avignon, and even Marseilles. As a coal fire lasts longer, and is much warmer than one of wood, it is used in smiths' shops, and foundries, and in steamboats.

“ I once went down to the bottom of a coal pit, where the miners were taking coal out of the mine.”

“ What is a mine ? ”

“ It is a bed under ground from which coals are dug, or in which iron, copper, silver, or gold are found, mixed with earth or stones.”

CHAPTER XX.

THE SHIPWRECK — LYONS.

“How quickly we are getting on ! Should you like to know where we are, and how far we have still to go ?

“We shall ask this sailor who is pacing up and down the deck. Will you be kind enough to tell us the name of the village we have just passed ?”

“It is Givors.”

“Does the railway not pass near here ?”

“Yes, sir ; and we can go in a very short time to Lyons. Two years ago I was sailing up the Rhone in a steamer just as we are doing to-day ; our boat was to stop several hours at Givors to put out

goods, and being in a hurry, I took the railway, and in half an hour I was in Lyons. This is the second time I have come this way, and I hope it may be the last."

"I thought you were employed in this boat."

"No, sir; I came from Messina. I was mate on board a brig which carried sugar to Venice."

"You are then a sailor? I had guessed that you were; your step was so steady, that I said when I saw you, That sailor looks as if he were keeping watch. But why have you left your brig?"

"We were shipwrecked in the Straits of Messina."

"And how did that happen?"

"It was on the 7th of February; the south wind had driven us in toward the shore; it changed in the night to the north, and drove us out to sea; then it changed

again to the south, and our brig, with its sails torn into ribbons, bounded and whirled on the waves like a spinning-top. Suddenly we felt a terrible shock ; the boat was on a sand-bank, and had six feet of water in the hold."

"Did you not make use of the pumps ?

"For two hours we did, but it was of no use, the water was coming in everywhere. As wave after wave dashed against the sides of our ship, we thought it would have gone to pieces. Oh, what a night it was ! and so dark. When the morning broke, the brig was lying on its side ; and as there was no hope of getting her afloat again, we hastened to save the casks of sugar which were not damaged. We were afraid that the masts would fall down and kill some of us, but they stood firm.

"For seven weeks we worked without stopping, to save the cargo and the rigging. The brig might still have been above wa-

ter, if it had not been for a frightful storm on the 31st of March ; the north wind turned it round, and instead of the waves dashing against its side as before, they broke over the deck, beating on it like a drum, and after a few hours it went to pieces."

"That was a most unfortunate accident, but man has no control over the winds and waves, and as you did every thing in your power, you have nothing for which to blame yourself. There are few who can say that when they look back on the past."

"It is a sad thing, however, sir, to be obliged to go back alone, after having sailed in a splendid ship."

"Where are you going now ?"

"To Havre, to get a place on board another vessel."

"Well a pleasant voyage to you ; and may He who has preserved you from the fury of the waves go with you always, and guide you to the desired haven."

“Come, dears, the sailor is going to walk up and down the deck again. We shall go back to mamma, and tell her that story.”

“What story, papa?”

“The one the sailor has just told us.”

“What did he say?”

“You have not been listening, then? Now, I remember, you were looking at his sunburnt face all the time he was speaking.”

“Papa, I know what he said, he told us that there was sugar in a ship, and that he played on a drum. I shall tell the story to mamma.”

“He told us something more.”

“What was it?”

“That the ship was a brig, — that means that it had two masts, — and that it was driven on shore by the south wind.”

“On the shore?”

“The shore is the earth and rocks round the edge of the sea.”

“Fortunately the north wind began to blow, and sent the brig out to sea again.

“Do you not remember one of your favorite games? One of you goes to each end of the room, and rolls a ball backwards and forwards. Well, the north and south winds seem as if they had played like Lily and Francis, driving the poor ship backwards and forwards, just as if it were a ball.”

“Lyons! Lyons!”

“Yes; that is Lyons now. I shall tell you the sailor’s story another time. I wish to show you the town.”

“Where is it?”

“Do you not see that white-looking smoke, and the houses appearing in the midst of it?”

“I see a very high tower, too.”

“That tower stands on a hill. The town is much larger than it seems from here. Your little feet could not walk

from one end of it to the other. Avignon lies on the side of the Rhone, Geneva, on the shore of a lake, and Lyons between two rivers, which join just where we are now."

"A bridge! A bridge!"

"It is a very strong one; the railway passes over it. Ah! we shall pass under it, for our boat is going to that side. Say good-by to the Rhone; we are leaving it now, and going into the Saone."

"That beautiful Rhone, shall we never see it again?"

"Oh, we shall see it on the road between Lyons and Geneva!"

"The Saone is not such a rapid river; it flows on more peacefully, because it does not come from such a great height as the Rhone."

"Papa, what very large trees!"

"These are chestnut trees, my dear. How pleasant and cool it would be to sit

under their shade in a hot day, and to look at the river and the houses through the branches ! These houses are very high.

“Some of these people look at us as they pass, others walk on without paying any attention. In large towns people must work hard, and they have no time to idle on the way. There is a man sitting on that bench looking at us. Oh, he has given over working ; he has worked enough !”

“Do you know him ?”

“Do you not see that he is leaning on a stick, and his hair has got quite white ?”

“He is an old man.”

“He is taking a rest, and thinking, perhaps of the long journey which he will very soon have to take.”

“Is he going on a long journey ?”

“Yes, my dears.”

“And where is it to ?”

“To give an account to God for every-

thing he has done. Do you know what I mean? Perhaps not. I will tell you. When I go away and leave you at home, I say to you, 'Be good and tell me when I come back what you have been doing.' Well, God said to that man when he sent him into the world, 'Love me; do what I tell you; be kind to every one. In a few years I will come and take you away, and ask you what you have been doing.'"

"What has this old man been doing?"

"We don't know. Perhaps he is afraid to meet God and tell him what he has done, and is asking God to forgive him. That is just what we should do, too, my dears."

"Will God forgive us?"

"Yes."

"But if we have been very wicked?"

"If the most wicked man asks God to forgive his sins for Christ's sake, God will pardon him, and make him good."

"And if people are very good?"

“ They still need to be pardoned in the same way, for there is no one in the world who has not sinned. One of the best men that ever lived, said in his prayer to God ; ‘ Enter not into judgment with me ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.’ ”

“ Papa, there is a horse galloping ! ”

“ It has got behind the trees which are planted on the quay, and we cannot see it.”

“ There are soldiers drilling ! ”

“ There are carriages driving along ! ”

“ The boat has stopped.”

“ Why ? ”

“ Because we have come to Lyons.”

“ May we get out soon ? ”

“ You must have patience, and amuse yourselves by looking out at the cabin windows for an hour yet. You shall see me pass on the quay.”

“ Are you going away ? ”

“ I am going to take places in the diligence for Geneva. I should like to take

you with me, but you could not walk so far. I shall come back very soon and take you to the large coach."

"We shall weary till you come back."

"Well, you may go and say good-by to the captain, who has been so kind to you; but you must not take up his time much, for I see he is busy with his books. And then you can ask mamma to give you something to do."

"I shall put my toys in the box."

"And I shall put my doll in its cradle."

"Very well."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE JOURNEY FROM LYONS — THE LAKE OF NANTUA — THE FIR BRANCHES.

“PAPA, I am so tired.”

“I am sure you are, my darling. You have been four nights out of your own little bed. And last night you hardly slept at all.

“Last night, on leaving Lyons, we saw heavy clouds in the sky, and we said, ‘We shall have rain now, and the air will be a little cooler.’ But not a single drop of rain fell; and the air was very close and stifling. You were very restless in your sleep; now and then you lifted your weary little head, and then let it fall again on my

knee. You wanted fresh air, and I had none to give you. The windows of the diligence were opened, but dust instead of air came in. See, I am covered all over with it. Beat the sleeve of my coat; that will do; do you not see what a cloud of dust?

“ Francis is waking up. I don’t think he knows where he is. Perhaps he thinks we have been on board the steamer all night. Francis, where are you ? ”

“ Here.”

“ In the boat ? ”

“ No ; in a coach.”

“ The little man has heard the noise of the horses’ bells, and the rumbling of the wheels, and then he sees that we are all crowded in here, where we have just room for our feet, and no room to run about as in the steamer.”

“ Where are we just now ? ”

“ Look ! Among the mountains. How

that cool morning air refreshes our sun-burnt faces. It looks as if a great deal of rain had fallen here, for there is no dust, and we see on the road a great many little hollows made by the water."

"O papa! what a beautiful lake! Is it the lake of Geneva?"

"No; it is the Lake of Nantua."

"How very green and calm the water is!"

"Why is it green?"

"Because the banks and hills which are reflected in it are green. Do you see that little footpath running along the side of the lake? Now, we lose sight of it; now, we see it again, and at last it is lost among the trees. Would it not be very pleasant to follow it through all its little windings? But the diligence goes on and carries us with it."

"Oh, what beautiful mountains. They are not like the ones at Marseilles, which

are only rocks without a blade of grass on them."

"What trees are these which I have often told you about?"

"Which ones?"

"These dark green ones, which look like ninepins planted on the mountain."

"Are these ninepins?"

"From a distance they look very small, and I daresay you think you could clear two or three of them at a leap; but if you saw one of them near, you would find that it is very high, and that you would need to look up very much to see the top of it. Some of them are higher than the column in the square at Marseilles. It would be only a great giant who could play with ninepins like these!"

"Are these fir-trees?"

"Yes, my dear Francis, these are fir-trees."

"Papa, will you give us one of them to

plant in the little garden which grand-mamma has made for us ? ”

“ O my boy ! you have forgotten what I told you, that these fir-trees are higher than houses. But to please you, I shall cut a branch off the first of these useful and beautiful trees that we come to.”

“ Will you go up the mountain to get it.”

“ Oh not so far, we shall find little ones growing by the road-side as we go on

“ But I must get out of the coach ; we have come to a steep part of the road, and I see several of the passengers have got down, to make it easier for the horses to go up the hill.”

“ Are you going to get our branch ? ”

“ Yes, Lily.”

“ Will you bring me one too ? ”

“ Oh, to be sure ! You shall each have one.”

“ Papa, papa, we are leaving you behind ! ”

“Don’t be afraid, dear, I shall soon make up to the coach again.”

“Papa has gone a little way up the hill ; he has stopped near a tree. There he is coming down again ; he is running as fast as he can to us. Oh, how delightful ! he has a branch in each hand.”

“There, children, there is a present from a beautiful fir-tree to you.”

“Did the tree tell you to give it to us ?”

“Trees cannot speak ; but if that fir-tree could speak, I am sure it would tell me a pretty story for my little children.”

“And what story would it be ?”

“Its own story.”

“Oh, do tell us it !”

“Well, when we get to the top of this hill, I shall come and sit down beside you, and make the fir-tree speak. Will that do ?”

“Yes, that will be charming ! Are we near the top of the hill yet ?”

“Not quite yet.”

“These are very pretty branches which you have given us.”

“Do you see that the leaves are in rows like the teeth of a comb?”

“Oh yes; but these teeth are not firm.”

“They bend more easily than the feather of a pen.”

“Papa, I shall plant my branch in my little garden, and it will grow a large tree.”

“I am not quite certain of that, my boy. There are some plants which grow in that way, which have a great deal of sap, and those whose leaves fall in autumn. The fir-tree is not one of that kind; so your branch which is so straight and beautiful just now with its green leaves, will be withered, and not fit for anything after a few days, but to be thrown into the fire.”

“Why?”

“Because it will not send out any more roots. You know that plants get food from two different places, — from the air

by their leaves, and from the earth by their roots. A tree would very soon die if we were to take away both its leaves and its roots, just as a man would soon die, if he were to sit down every day before a well-covered table, without a mouth to eat any of the good things on it. The leaves and the roots are the mouths of plants."

CHAPTER XXII

THE FIR-TREE'S STORY — THE PINE TREE — THE TRAVELLERS.

“AH! here we are now, at the top of the hill. Keep away from the door in case you should fall out when I open it. Now, we are all in our places. Little Harry is smiling; he looks as if he were glad to see us all together again.”

“Now tell us the story you promised.”

“Very well. Suppose we are sitting near the tree from which I cut these pretty branches, and it begins to speak to us. Here is what it says, — ‘I am a fir-tree. I grow on the hill. My leaves are always green, and I am the largest of all the trees of the forest. But I have not always

been so big. Some years ago I was shut up in a cone, like those you see lying on the ground.' ”

“Where are they? I do not see any.”

“There are none in the diligence, but they are to be found under fir-trees.”

“One very hot day this cone opened, and a very small seed came out, so small that a child could hide it in its little hand. This seed was carried away by the water which came down from the hill during a storm. Fortunately it came against a stone in its passage, which stopped it and sheltered it. When the storm was past, and the course of the storm was dry, it found itself buried under a heap of broken leaves mixed with earth.”

“Poor little seed ! ”

“Oh, it is not to be pitied at all ; that was just what it needed.”

“A few months after a little blade of grass appeared above the earth ; that was me.”

“ Was it you, papa ? ”

“ No, no, it was the fir-tree ; you must remember it is the fir-tree that is speaking.”

“ I was so very little at that time, that if you had passed over the spot you could very easily have trampled on me, although I cover you now with my shade.

“ You see I have grown very much since that time ; every year my head rises a little higher, and my branches stretch out round me like arms. I live to a great age. Men do not live so long as fir-trees. When you are very old, and hardly able to walk or stand upright, I shall be quite as green and as straight as I am to-day.’ ”

“ Has the fir-tree finished its story ? ”

“ Yes, but it has not told you that some day it will be cut down.”

“ What a pity ! ”

“ It is only then that it will be really useful ; it will perhaps be made into

a mast for a ship, or a beam to hold up a roof, or it will be sawn into logs for houses, or carriages, or used for various pieces of furniture."

"Are there any fir-trees at Marseilles?"

"No, dear. Fir-trees do not grow in warm countries or near the sea. But there is a tree which grows on the hills of Provence very like the fir-tree, and it belongs to the same family. It is the pine; it is tall like the fir-tree, and green too, and it bears cones also, nearly of the same shape."

"Papa, tell us its story."

"But I have already told you the half of it."

"We should like better to hear the tree speak?"

"Well, it will tell you the rest of it."

"I do not need to tell you my name. You know me already. You have seen me often by the sea-shore, and you have

rested under my shade. I like dry, sandy ground. I look like a parasol from a distance."

"Like my little parasol?"

"Yes, Lily."

"When the wind blows through my branches, people think they hear the distant noise of the tempest. But the more I am beaten about by the storm, the larger and stronger I grow. The little trees round about me have nothing to fear. My thick green dress shelters them from the cold winds, quite as well as a wall could do."

"You see that I am a useful tree; and I bear a fruit which is very good to eat, and tastes very like hazel-nuts, and which is often made into sugar-plums. And my branches give to the poor, who have no oil to put into their lamps, a beautiful light which costs them nothing."

"How do you know that story?"

"It is very pretty. Tell it again."

"Oh, not just now."

“Do you not remember what the pine said to you?”

“It said that it was like my little parasol.”

“Why are fir-trees not like my parasol?”

“Look at these houses down in the valley. Are they like the houses at Marseilles?”

“No.”

“What is on the top of ours?”

“A terrace.”

“There could not be a terrace unless the roof were flat.”

“Are the roofs of the houses flat in this part of the country?”

“No; they are sloping.”

“Can you tell me why the roofs are flat at Marseilles and sloping at Bellegarde?”

“I don’t know.”

“Is there any snow at Marseilles?”

“Very little.”

“And here?”

“A great deal.”

“If the roofs were flat in this country the snow would be heaped up on them, and would at last destroy the houses ; but as they are sloping, it slips off all round and falls to the ground.

“Now, do you understand why the fir-trees have not a large top and branches spread out like a parasol ?”

“Is it to prevent the snow destroying them ?”

“Yes, dear. You see that God is very good. He does not put on a tree or any creature a heavier load than it can bear. He has been very good to us, for he has preserved us from accident till now.”

“Papa, is that Geneva down there ?”

“No, it is Bellegarde. A few hours more, my little travellers, and we shall be at Geneva.”

“Are we travellers ?”

“Yes, dear, that is what people are called who go from one place to another. And

we shall still be travellers even after our journey to Geneva is over."

"Why?"

"Where were Lily and Francis five years ago? They did not know anything, or any person, and no one knew them."

"God has placed them on the earth."

"To live there always?"

"No, they must soon leave it. They began the journey when they came into the world, they are still going on, and they will come to the end of it when they die."

"Papa, what you said just now has made me very sad."

"But it should not make you sad. Are you not very happy to go to Geneva?"

"Yes, very."

"And why should you not be happy to go to heaven?"

"Because there is no grandmamma there."

“ Yes, there is one there already — my mother; and the other grandmamma will very soon be there too. I hope we shall all meet there one day, in the presence of our heavenly Father. We are all very happy in the prospect of meeting our friends at Geneva; but in a few months we shall have to go away from them again, and that is very sad.

“ In heaven there will be no good-by's; we shall not need to write to those we love, for after we have met there we shall be always together.”

“ I wish to go to heaven.”

“ But we shall not be able to get into heaven.”

“ Why?”

“ Because there is no door in the sky.”

“ Oh, don't vex yourself about that, my boy; when the Lord Jesus went up to heaven, he said to his disciples, who were sorry at his going away, ‘ I go to prepare a

place for you, and when it is prepared I will come again and take you with me, so that where I am there ye may be also."

"Will he take little children too?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because he loves them. Will you not love this good Lord Jesus?"

"Yes; we will."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LITTLE BEGGAR GIRL — THE FORTRESS OF L'ECLUSE — SWITZERLAND.

“TAKE your places in the coach, ladies and gentlemen.”

“Come, children, the guard is calling us ; get into your cage ; the next time you will have to get down again will be at Geneva.”

“Are you not going in with us, papa ?”

“No ; after leaving Bellegarde we come to a steep hill. I am going to walk, but I shall keep near the diligence.

“Now your house which runs on wheels, is off. It has just crossed a bridge which is much higher than any we have seen on the Rhone ; the torrent which rushes on below it, has hollowed out a bed for itself

among the rocks. This road is shaded on both sides by beautiful walnut-trees.

“What do you see at the side of the road?”

“A precipice. It is so very deep that a cow down in the valley does not look larger than a goat. I wished to show you the Rhone, but I can scarcely see it myself through these thick branches which hang over the precipice.”

“Don’t go so near, papa!”

“Don’t be afraid for me. I am coming back to you immediately.”

“Will you help a poor little girl who is very hungry? Will you give me a penny to buy bread?”

“Papa, come, quick. Here is a poor little beggar girl who is very hungry; she has nothing to eat.”

“We must not give her money.”

“Why? You told us that all little children are our brothers and sisters.”

“ Yes, but that little girl has deceived us. Do you not see that her cheeks are as round and rosy as Harry’s. That shows that there is no want of bread in her father’s house. She has even a little bit of bread in her hand, which she is hiding under her apron.”

“ What did you say to her, papa ? She goes away hanging down her head.”

“ I have given her something.”

“ You have not taken it out of your purse.”

“ A friend of the Lord Jesus one day met a man who was lame. When he saw the poor man stretching out his hand to him, he stopped and said, ‘ I have neither gold nor silver, but what I have I give thee.’ ”

“ And what did he give him ? ”

“ He healed him. No one now can give such good help to a poor person ; but there is something that every one can give.”

“ What is it ? ”

“A kind word. Even little children can give that. If we should happen to meet a poor little ragged boy just now, and if he were to hold out his hand to you for something, what would you do? You have no money; the provision basket is empty, — Francis, has just eaten the last biscuit.”

“I would tell him that another day I would give him my luncheon.”

“But you would not see him again, for the diligence is carrying us away.”

“Then, I would tell him — O what should I say to him, papa?”

“My friend, the good God sees you, and loves you. Pray to him. He will give you food, as he gives it to the little birds.”

“Would the little boy be pleased with that?”

“Yes, the poor and unhappy are pleased when any one speaks to them kindly.

“Here we are again among the moun-

tains. You will soon see one of the gates of France."

"Is it a large gate?"

"The name gate is given to any narrow pass among the hills between two countries. There is very often a fort built at such a place. The one we are coming to is called the Fort of Ecluse. I know a brave captain who was shut up there with his soldiers to defend it. When it was attacked, I assure you that it would not have been pleasant to be near this place; the cannons roared and the bullets swept along this very road.

"There is the fort; it has on the right a mountain, on the left another mountain, and down there, between the two, the Rhone. There is, then, no other road through the pass than the one along which we are driving. See, we are going to pass through the fortress."

"What a noise!"

“It is the diligence passing over the drawbridge: there is one on the way in and another on the way out from the fort. If, now that we are in, the drawbridge on the Geneva side were to be raised, we could not go any further, for we should be prisoners. Prisoners would not be very ill off here. They would have a very fine view. Look! we can see a part of Savoy, and down there, at the bottom of the pass, your friend, the Rhone, looks as if it were hurrying to leave this beautiful country, — ungrateful river that it is.

“But if we were really prisoners here we would cast longing looks towards Geneva, and feel sad to think we could not get out when, from the top of the fort, we could see through the clouds the snowy top of Mount Blanc and the other beautiful mountains round it.

“But don't be afraid; we are not going to be prisoners. See, we are out already,

Fort, cannons, drawbridge, everything is already far behind us.

“Postilion, make the horses go faster ! Horses, gallop quick along this beautiful road ; we are longing to get to the end of our journey. Behind these trees and these hills there are many eyes looking for us, and many friends who are asking if the dust on the road is not raised by our diligence passing along.

“It seems as if the horses knew what was said ; they are galloping on ; they soon leave the hedges behind them . The country people are wondering at our rapid pace ; they raise their heads to look at us, but in a minute we are past and far away from them.

“What a fresh, cool breeze comes to bid us welcome ; it has passed over the snow, — it has blown through the fir-trees — it has skimmed the waters of the lake, and now it plays on our faces and tosses about our hair.

“ Children, there is Switzerland at last ! We are entering it now ; but we must not quite forget France, that other country which we have come from. When shall we see it again ? Ah ! who knows to what places we may yet be carried ? But it is a comfort to think that, although we may be far away from the places we have known and loved, and even far away from our own country, we have a better country, a home in heaven, to which we are always drawing nearer. Still, in whatever part of the world we may pitch our tent, our hearts will never lose sight of the towers of St. Pierre, to which we are going, or of the rocks of Provence, which we have left behind.

“ Our homes on earth are, after all, only resting-places for a short time. We must, sooner or later, leave them all. Let us often think of our home in our Father’s house above, and like the good people long

ago, of whom we read in the Bible, let us live 'like strangers and pilgrims on earth, desiring a better country, that is an heavenly.'" (Heb. xi. 13-16.)

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